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**Assessment of progress made on the implementation
of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of
forests and towards the achievement of the four global
objectives on forests**

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared to contribute to the assessment by the United Nations Forum on Forests of progress made in implementing the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) and towards the achievement of the four global objectives on forests. Specifically, the report consolidates and analyses information provided in 16 voluntary national reports, and presents actions taken, challenges encountered and lessons learned, as well as information that can be used in future reporting. An exemplary pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument in Ghana, showcasing actions to determine priorities and analyse gaps, strengths and weaknesses, and other measures to address identified challenges are described. The report also draws on other sources of information, including the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and inputs provided by regional and subregional entities. National reports indicate that many countries, building on existing efforts, have introduced or strengthened policy, institutional and normative measures and other actions that support the implementation of the forest instrument and its four global objectives, while others are in the process of doing so.

* E/CN.18/2011/1.



Reports also indicate the continued usefulness of existing forest policy frameworks and strategies, such as national forest programmes, for sustainable forest management, as well as the benefits of the forest instrument as an overarching framework for ongoing and enhanced activities. Nevertheless, developing countries in particular identified challenges encountered, especially resource constraints. In that regard, a number of initiatives are planned or under way to assist countries with future voluntary reporting to the Forum.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Relevant Forum decisions	3
Global objectives on forests and the forest instrument	3
III. Status of reporting to the Forum: 2002-2010	4
IV. Summary of national reports submitted for the ninth session of the Forum	5
A. Overview	5
B. Ghana pilot project: assessment of the implementation of the forest instrument	6
C. Progress towards the global objectives on forests and related actions identified in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument	8
D. Progress from a cross-cutting perspective	14
E. Challenges encountered	17
F. Lessons learned	18
G. Support provided by regional and subregional organizations	18
V. Future reporting	19
VI. Conclusions	20
VII. Recommendations	21

I. Introduction

1. The present report responds to United Nations Forum on Forests resolution 7/1, specifically paragraphs 19 and 20 of the annex thereto, in which the Secretary-General is requested to prepare an analytical report for the ninth session of the Forum to help the Forum assess overall progress made on the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (hereinafter also referred to as the forest instrument) and towards the achievement of the four global objectives on forests. It analyses and consolidates information presented in national reports and provides information that can be used in future reporting.

2. At the time of reporting, voluntary national information had been submitted by 16 Member States. An exemplary pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument in Ghana is highlighted in order to showcase the steps taken to determine priorities and analyse gaps, strengths and weaknesses, as well as other measures to address identified challenges. In addition, information contained in the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and inputs provided by 15 regional and subregional entities, were considered in the preparation of the present report.

II. Relevant Forum decisions

Global objectives on forests and the forest instrument

3. With a view to attaining the main objective of the international arrangement on forests and enhancing the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 2006/49, adopted the four global objectives on forests, as follows, agreeing to work globally and nationally to achieve progress towards their attainment by 2015:

(a) Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;

(b) Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;

(c) Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests;

(d) Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

4. In December 2007, by its resolution 62/98, the General Assembly adopted the forest instrument,¹ declaring that it had the following purpose:

¹ The forest instrument was adopted by the Forum at its seventh session (see E/CN.18/2007/8 and Corr.1).

(a) To strengthen political commitment and action at all levels to implement effectively sustainable management of all types of forests and to achieve the shared global objectives on forests;

(b) To enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability;

(c) To provide a framework for national action and international cooperation.²

5. In paragraph 5 of the instrument, Member States reaffirm their commitment to work at all levels to make progress towards the attainment of the four objectives by 2015. Moreover, paragraphs 6 and 7 of the instrument identify, respectively, 25 national policies and measures and 19 actions related to international cooperation and means of implementation to fulfil the instrument's purpose. Therefore, the implementation of the instrument can be a means to attain the four global objectives. The monitoring and assessment of progress, together with the voluntary submission of national progress reports as part of regular reporting to the Forum, are requested in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the instrument, respectively.

6. While the forest instrument and the global objectives on forests are sometimes referred to separately in Forum resolutions, they are inextricably linked in practice and share the aspiration to enhance sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. This point is reflected in paragraph 2 (b) (i) of the resolution entitled "Forest in a changing environment, enhanced cooperation and cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination; regional and subregional inputs", adopted by the Forum at its eighth session, in which the integrated framework offered by the forest instrument is highlighted as a means to ensure coherence and avoid duplication. While there is no direct hierarchical or linear relationship between the global objectives on forests and national and international provisions contained in the instrument, paragraphs 6 and 7 can be understood to mean that the implementation of the global objectives and the forest instrument will contribute to sustainable forest management overall.

III. Status of reporting to the Forum: 2002-2010

7. From 2002 to 2005, the Forum invited Member States to submit voluntary national reports on progress made in implementing the proposals for action made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests for the corresponding sessions of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Following the adoption of the forest instrument in 2007, reporting was focused on the instrument and the global objectives. Since 2002, 86 countries have submitted national reports, ranging from 14 in 2002 to 54 in 2005. Three countries³ submitted national reports for all six sessions, with 24 countries submitting reports for between three and five sessions. However, 41 countries submitted national reports for only one of the six sessions for which they had been requested to submit reports.

² General Assembly resolution 62/98, annex, para. 1.

³ Finland, Mexico and New Zealand.

8. For the Forum's eighth session, held in May 2009, 21 countries submitted progress reports. Inputs were also received from 29 regional or subregional entities and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The reports provided useful insights into actions being taken and indicated the considerable potential of the instrument as a framework. However, it was recognized that only a short time had elapsed since the adoption of the instrument.

9. To facilitate the preparation of voluntary national reports for the Forum's ninth session, the Forum secretariat circulated guidelines and a format that countries could use, as well as a survey for regional and subregional entities. At the time of reporting, 16 countries and 15 regional or subregional entities had made submissions. The fact that there has been an uneven response on the part of countries to requests for national reports is likely due to limited resources and technical capacity, as well as to the burden placed on countries by increased reporting demands.

IV. Summary of national reports submitted for the ninth session of the Forum

A. Overview

10. At the time reporting, 16 countries, including 11 developing countries or countries with economies in transition and 5 developed countries, had made submissions: Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Cyprus,⁴ El Salvador, Finland,⁴ Gabon, Ghana, Jamaica, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Slovakia and Switzerland.

11. National reports indicated that many of the countries listed above had introduced or strengthened policy, institutional and normative measures and other actions supporting the implementation of the forest instrument and the global objectives on forests, while others were in the process of doing so. These efforts were seen as building on existing initiatives aimed at implementing the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, as well as previous resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Some countries reported that many of the elements of the forest instrument were already part of their policy and legislative frameworks for achieving sustainable forest management, emphasizing national forest programmes, plans and related strategies as useful vehicles for taking forward the instrument.

12. The interconnections and the crossover between the global objectives and paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument were reflected in most national reports. In addition, numerous actions reported as contributing to a particular global objective had contributed to the implementation of one or more of the instrument's provisions. Overlap across the four global objectives was also evident, with some actions reported under one global objective often seen as relevant to the achievement of another. Furthermore, countries reported on governance and related policy matters linked to provisions of the instrument.

⁴ Cyprus and Finland, noting that their national reports for the eighth session of the Forum were still valid, provided updates.

13. National submissions, available at the time of reporting, are posted on the Forum website.⁵ Although the responses are relatively limited in numbers, they give a valuable indication of the broad range of actions taken. The present report is also complemented by information from other sources, including regional and subregional inputs that are also available on the Forum website.⁶

14. Among the country reports, that submitted by Ghana described its pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument. While raising the awareness of stakeholders in the country about the forest instrument, Ghana carried out an assessment of the current situation regarding the implementation of the instrument. The results provide a helpful baseline for monitoring progress on implementation and for reporting to the Forum. A monitoring system, drawing on existing tools in the forest sector, is currently under development. Lessons learned from this pilot project are presented below as an example of how the forest instrument can serve as an important mechanism for coordination with other national policy processes. Further details of the project will be announced at the ninth session of the Forum.

B. Ghana pilot project: assessment of the implementation of the forest instrument

15. In 2008, Ghana became the first country to systematically implement the forest instrument, with technical support provided by FAO and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, and funding from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The project entitled "Moving forward in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests" was aimed at identifying Ghana's gaps, strengths and weaknesses with respect to the national policies and measures set forth in the forest instrument, as well as determining priorities and initiating programmes needed to address gaps and weaknesses.

16. The project, which was launched in 2009, resulted in the following:

(a) A project steering committee, with representation from stakeholders in the forest sector, was established to review project activities and provide advice on issues related to implementation;

(b) Regional stakeholder workshops were organized to raise awareness among forest users and others and to help assess Ghana's implementation efforts in relation to the forest instrument;

(c) Outcomes of regional workshops were utilized at a national stakeholder workshop;

(d) The African Forestry and Wildlife Commission began collaborating with civil society organizations (such as CARE and the World Wildlife Fund), traditional authorities and private sector institutions (including the Ghana Timber Association), and initiatives such as Ghana's voluntary partnership agreement with the European Union, to engage in dialogue and review progress on project implementation.

⁵ See <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff9.html>.

⁶ See <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff9.html#regions>.

17. In regional and national stakeholder consultations, the following four areas referred to in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument, and initial "catalytic" activities related to each area, were identified as priorities for making progress on sustainable forest management:

(a) **Promote cross-sectoral coordination.** Activity: enhance the visibility of the forestry sector's contribution to national development planning;

(b) **Strengthen forest law enforcement.** Activity: enhance the watchdog role of communities in combating corruption and other illegal activities;

(c) **Develop financing strategies for sustainable forest management.** Activity: enhance the access of local stakeholders to funding sources that support socio-economic activities in the forestry sector;

(d) **Integrate national forest programmes into relevant national development plans and poverty reduction strategies.** Activity: enhance the capacity of district assemblies in the development and implementation of district forestry programmes.

18. Stakeholders also identified three thematic areas as cross-cutting issues requiring priority attention: (a) gender, (b) education and (c) science and technology. A monitoring system is currently being pilot-tested in two forest districts with a view to the implementation of the initial catalytic activities relating to the four priority areas. An evaluation system is also being pilot-tested.

19. The following challenges in implementing the forest instrument were identified:

(a) Insufficient funding and human resources to carry out collaborative forest management, to build capacity for resource management, to improve infrastructure and to strengthen law enforcement capacities;

(b) Widespread poverty among rural forest-dependent communities, many of which lack viable alternative forms of livelihood;

(c) Unsustainable agricultural practices resulting in the loss of forest cover, owing to the lack of a suitable land-use policy framework to address the impacts of agriculture on forests;

(d) Lack of effective inter-ministerial collaboration to harmonize conflicting land-use policies (for example, conservation and the bushmeat trade). Many of the drivers of deforestation are outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission;

(e) Limited natural resource accounting in the national budget to capture the contribution of the forest sector to national development.

Lessons learned

20. Although the pilot project is still in its early stages, it is clear that the forest instrument has the potential to provide an overarching and integrated framework and performance assessment tool for national action and international cooperation related to the forests of Ghana. Through the pilot, the instrument has already served as an effective framework for:

(a) Engaging stakeholders and raising public awareness;

(b) Developing forest sector monitoring and evaluation systems;

(c) Developing a database of existing forest-related policies, structures and initiatives.

21. The lessons learned from the pilot project have been documented and shared at national and international forums and will be highlighted at the ninth session of the Forum. The approach taken by Ghana has shown promise for application in other countries. Three countries, in Africa, Latin America and Asia, will shortly join the pilot effort. Broadening these efforts to additional countries, however, will depend on international support and funding availability.

C. Progress towards the global objectives on forests and related actions identified in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument

Global objective 1: reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation

22. The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 provides up-to-date information about the state of the world's forest resources. Forests currently cover 31 per cent of the Earth's land mass. Rates of deforestation, including in particular the conversion of tropical forests to agricultural lands, have decreased over the past decade, from 16 million hectares per year in the 1990s to a current average of approximately 13 million hectares per year. Nevertheless, deforestation rates remain alarmingly high, particularly in South America and Africa. Large-scale tree planting has significantly reduced the net loss of forest area, which declined from 8.3 million hectares per year from 1990 to 2000 to 5.2 million hectares per year from 2000 to 2010. Today, planted forests account for 7 per cent, or 264 million hectares, of the total forest area, reflecting an increase of approximately 5 million hectares per year from 2005 to 2010. In addition to the conversion of forests to agricultural lands, forest fires, pests and diseases, natural disasters, conflicts in forested areas and invasive species have been major causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

23. Following are examples of actions described by countries in their national reports, to attain global objective 1 and carry out activities set out in the forest instrument (for example, in its paragraphs 6 (o) and 7 (d), (h), (i) and (j)). A number of the actions have contributed to the attainment of other global objectives:

(a) Forest legislation has been enforced to prevent change in land use. National plans have been prepared for the control and prevention of forest fires, with an emphasis on protecting forests from fires. For Cyprus in particular, this has included reinforcing traditional preventive measures with more advanced technologies, including an automatic fire detection system. Some countries reported on actions taken to protect forests from other health hazards. For example, Mexico reported on measures to assess the impact of pests and diseases on forests, as well as plans to adopt appropriate response technologies;

(b) Efforts have been made to promote reforestation and restoration of degraded forested lands, including those affected by forest fires, with a particular focus on priority watersheds. Brazil reported that it had expanded its planted forest area from 350,000 to 650,000 hectares, while Mozambique reported on the reforestation of approximately 35,000 hectares from 2005 to 2009. The massive

reforestation project in Mexico, being carried out through a comprehensive policy, planning and programming approach, includes the updating of the national forest programme 2001-2006; a strategic forestry programme concluding in 2025; a public awareness and reforestation programme for 2007-2012; an institutional programme for 2007-2012; and a revision of the forest finance strategy whereby substantial funds are committed to the forestry sector, including for projects implemented by local authorities and communities. Other examples include the extension of forest cover through afforestation, particularly on private lands, which has helped to reverse forest cover loss in countries such as Cyprus. In the case of the Philippines, examples related to strategies on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and on the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+) were reported as being carried out with respect to all four global objectives. In Mozambique, reforestation activities generated 8,000 jobs during the period 2005-2009, and large-scale commercial forest plantations have been established in several areas;

(c) Mechanisms for strengthening participation by stakeholders, in particular women, to reverse the loss of forest cover were reported;

(d) Improvements in forest monitoring mechanisms were also mentioned as useful for the accurate identification of trends in the gain or loss of forest cover. El Salvador, for example, is attempting to raise funds to enable it to conduct an inventory of its forest resources, while the Philippines has adopted national criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and an audit system to assess the performance of its forest management unit. The Philippines is also conducting national inventories of forest resources in ancestral domain sites.

24. For several countries, a well-conceived national forest programme, underpinned by strong national legislation, has served as the foundation for effective action to reverse the loss of forest cover, while others cited the importance of forest law enforcement in addressing illegal logging and the illicit trade in forest products. Other developments include recently developed national reforestation and afforestation policies in Bangladesh and Mozambique, with the latter country promoting reforestation through a new presidential initiative and public forest awareness campaigns. Cyprus cited its efforts to adequately fund rural development programmes in order to promote forest protection and expansion, while Papua New Guinea reported on the development of a new reforestation policy connected to a plantation development programme.

25. Despite efforts in support of global objective 1, Papua New Guinea reported forest replenishment impediments arising from resource constraints. Also highlighted was the need for funding to empower indigenous peoples in terms of both technical and scientific and traditional modes of monitoring forest areas. Reported causes of the loss of forest cover include the expansion of the agricultural frontier, urban development, forest fires and large-scale logging with little reforestation.

Global objective 2: enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people

26. According to the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010, the annual value of wood removals remained unchanged from 1990 to 2000, rose by 5 per cent

annually from 2000 to 2005 and then dropped sharply. They were valued at just over \$100 billion per year from 2003 to 2007. The reported value of non-wood forest removals was approximately \$18.5 billion in 2005, with food products accounting for the greatest share of that amount. However, as a result of limited reporting by countries, the value of non-forest products remains underestimated. Approximately 10 million people are employed in forest management and conservation but many more are directly dependent on forests for their livelihoods. The Assessment also indicates that the management of forests for social and cultural functions is increasing, but that the area in question is difficult to quantify. Soil and water conservation is the primary objective for 8 per cent, or approximately 330 million hectares, of the world's forests.

27. Following are examples of reported actions to attain global objective 2 and carry out activities set out in the forest instrument (for example, in its paragraphs 6 (d), (f), (j), (l), (s), (v), (w) and (y) and 7 (k)). A number of the actions have contributed to the attainment of other global objectives:

(a) A range of conservation, utilization, industrialization and marketing activities have been promoted in order to generate economic benefits for local communities and support sustainable forest management. Several countries cited efforts to reduce poverty in forest-dependent local communities;

(b) Indigenous peoples' rights and rights-based approaches have been promoted, as well as activities related to free, prior and informed consent processes and the identification of safeguards. In this regard, the Philippines emphasized spiritual and cultural bonds to forest areas. The integration of indigenous community policies into local ordinances and legislation and the strengthening of indigenous communities' representation in local development councils were also highlighted. In addition, practices in managing conflict over natural resources, as well as the establishment of basic policies to increase the resiliency of indigenous communities in defending their territories in order to achieve peace and security, were cited;

(c) Brazil reported that more than 10 million hectares of new indigenous areas were recognized, that 6 million hectares of land had been designated to enable local communities to work on the sustainable management of forest products, and that 3 million hectares of sustainable settlements had been established;

(d) Certification processes for wood products have been adopted. Brazil reported that it was promoting the national and international certification of forest products to enhance their marketability. Brazil has also established a system to guarantee minimum prices for community-based forest products. Similarly, the Philippines reported the establishment of a computer-based lumber/timber origin certification monitoring system to track the transport of forest products. A system for non-timber forest products is also being developed;

(e) On the basis of an assessment of forest recreation demands and needs, Cyprus has identified important sites for forest recreation, providing financial support for those most suitable (camping and picnic sites, nature trails and botanical gardens) for both local residents and visitors;

(f) Public awareness-raising and education campaigns on the economic benefits of forest goods and services have been strengthened. The Philippines, for example, has been conducting educational and communication campaigns among

the general public and expanding capacity-building activities on sustainable forest management, including active participation in the Social Forestry Network of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations;

(g) Several countries reported on mechanisms for promoting the participation of stakeholders, in particular the private sector, local communities and women, in forestry development, including through the application of environmentally sound technologies. With the support of the European Union, Papua New Guinea has developed an eco-forestry programme that promotes community participation in the use and management of forest resources. The financing of the initiative has been assumed by the national Government;

(h) The competitiveness of forest products has been enhanced through measures to improve their quality. Gabon, Mexico and Papua New Guinea, for example, stressed the importance of making the transition from the exportation of logs to diversification and the processing of wood products with added value. In the case of Gabon, Ghana and Mozambique, bans on log exportation have been implemented in order to stimulate local processing. Cameroon, as a country in the Congo basin, reported on the need to address the small contribution of forests to the national economy;

(i) A number of countries reported the establishment of programmes in which local stakeholders pay for ecosystem services to support the protection of forests.

28. In many countries, national forest programmes and strategies have provided the framework for action to achieve global objective 2. El Salvador is revising its national forest policy and forest legislation with the aim of balancing the country's demand for forest goods and services with the conservation of ecosystems that allow for sustainable social and economic development. In Cyprus, Mexico and Mozambique, rural development policies and plans have been useful in promoting forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits that have helped to improve livelihoods in local communities. Similarly, other countries, including Jamaica, have made use of local forest management committees. The Philippines noted the development of a forestry information system to monitor the performance of forestry tenure holders vis-à-vis the terms and conditions of their forestry agreements with the Government.

Global objective 3: increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests

29. The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 indicates that legally established protected areas account for 13 per cent of the world's forests. The amount of forest area within protected-area systems has increased by nearly 63 million hectares since 2000. Twelve per cent, or more than 460 million hectares, of the world's forests have been designated as suitable for biodiversity conservation, with nearly 44 million hectares being set aside during the period 2000-2005. The Assessment also indicates that the amount of forest area covered by management plans, an important tool for sustainable forest management, has been increasing, although information is available for only 80 per cent of the total forested area. Currently, 1.6 billion hectares of forests are covered by management plans.

30. Following are examples of reported actions to attain global objective 3 and carry out related activities set out in the forest instrument (for example, in its paragraphs 6 (e), (p), (q) and (x) and 7 (d) and (g)). A number of the actions have contributed to the attainment of other global objectives:

(a) The establishment of protected areas, including national parks and reserves, has helped to increase the protected forest areas in various countries. Brazil reported that the total area protected by the federal Government had expanded from 67 million to 74 million hectares. Finland reported that an additional 10,000 hectares of public lands would be protected by 2010 and between 178,000 and 272,000 hectares of private forests by 2016. Cameroon stated that it planned to increase its permanent forest estate from 40 per cent to 55 per cent of all forested areas over the next few years. Ghana has redesignated forests as globally significant biodiversity areas;

(b) In placing priority on ensuring effective participation by local communities in implementing management plans for protected forest areas, Bangladesh plans to assess the performance of local communities and to prepare case studies in that regard;

(c) Forest sector employment measures in the Philippines have included action to hire more than 50,000 individuals as forest guards to carry out forest protection activities in order to address untenured land;

(d) El Salvador is revising its national forest policy to promote the sustainable management of forests, particularly in key watersheds;

(e) Cyprus has focused efforts on rehabilitating degraded protected areas and has undertaken the revision of management plans for both protected and other forest areas. Cyprus has also developed plans for the monitoring of selected ecosystems, habitats and species;

(f) Mozambique has conducted a survey of the status of forest reserves to identify priority needs in improving their management;

(g) Gabon reported that more than 3 million hectares of forests had been protected, that approximately 2 million hectares had been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and that a total of 6 million hectares were being sustainably managed. Mexico is committed to increasing its total area of sustainably managed forests by 7.92 million hectares during the period 2007-2012. Similarly, Mozambique reported on plans to expand its sustainably managed forest area. Gabon and Mexico also cited their participation in forest certification processes;

(h) New Zealand has maintained a steady total area of forests under conservation, including approximately 5 million hectares of indigenous forests, through measures including regulatory processes, the establishment of voluntary criteria for sustainable plantation forest management, third-party certification, voluntary industry approaches to the sourcing of legal timber and wood products and the prevention of illegal logging, and programmes to raise community awareness of legality issues.

31. Finland and New Zealand are contributing to the attainment of global objective 3 by providing financial assistance to developing countries for projects aimed at the protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests, the development of

plantation forests to ease pressure on protected areas, and the development of market-based mechanisms to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

32. Actions in support of global objective 3 have been carried out as part of national forest programmes in most reporting countries. Supportive national legislation on protected areas and wildlife has provided the legal basis for increasing the protected areas in Cyprus, El Salvador and Mexico and the number of sustainably managed forests in Gabon.

Global objective 4: reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management

33. Following are examples of reported actions to attain global objective 4 and carry out related activities set out in the forest instrument (for example, in its paragraphs 6 (i) and 7 (a), (b), (c) and (e)). A number of the actions have contributed to the attainment of other global objectives:

(a) In terms of bilateral cooperation to support sustainable forest management, Finland reported on its support for neighbouring countries, including the Russian Federation. New Zealand cited its financial and in kind support for sustainable forest management in developing countries, provided through its Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, primarily by way of core funding for international organizations. Switzerland highlighted its support provided through the implementation of projects aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) in Colombia, Indonesia, Ghana and Madagascar, as well as its active participation in the interim REDD+ partnership work programme. Switzerland also mentioned its support, provided through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, for a number of forest projects in developing countries;

(b) Since 2006, Cyprus has evolved from being an aid recipient to being an aid donor. It is increasing its official development assistance (ODA) through 2015, at which time its ODA should reach 0.33 per cent of its gross national income. Its ODA strategy for 2006-2010 identifies agriculture and the environment, including forestry and environmental protection, as one of three thematic areas for assistance;

(c) Recipient countries such as Bangladesh, Gabon and Ghana are actively seeking funding from diverse sources, including the World Bank, the International Tropical Timber Organization, bilateral development agencies and regional development banks. Mozambique has reached finance agreements with Finland, to support the implementation of its national forest programme for 2009-2013 with €11.44 million; with Japan, to support its REDD programme with \$7 million; and with others. From 2007 to 2010, Papua New Guinea mobilized resources from bilateral development agencies and international organizations and simultaneously committed its own resources to fund REDD+ pilot projects. The national REDD+ strategy of the Philippines includes a sustainable financing component to encourage and enforce significant reductions in forestry sector emissions;

(d) Mexico has established a programme in which payments are made for forest ecosystem services. It includes a forest fund to stimulate investments in sustainable forest management that supports production, conservation and

rehabilitation activities in the forest sector. The Philippines also recognized payments for ecosystem services as a mechanism that could help to finance sustainable forest management. In addition, the need to provide incentives for indigenous peoples to protect watershed areas serving other communities was mentioned;

(e) Brazil has established a number of funds that support the forest instrument, including the Amazon Fund and the Forest Development Fund. Gabon has established a national forest fund and a project to establish payments for forest ecosystem services. Ghana is also developing a forest investment programme;

(f) El Salvador is working closely with the private sector to stimulate investment in sustainable forest management. The Philippines noted activities under way through the Forest Investment Forum and actions to promote investment in natural forest management, forest products processing, climate change mitigation in relation to forests, and other environmental services. Corporate social responsibility and the importance of inter-agency cooperation and coordination in traditional forest management systems were also reported.

34. Several of the measures implemented by countries have been developed with technical and financial support provided by international, regional and bilateral development agencies and organizations.

D. Progress from a cross-cutting perspective

35. At the time of its adoption by the General Assembly in September 2007, the forest instrument was available in all six United Nations official languages. If it is to be effectively implemented at the national level, the instrument must be available in a country's official language(s). Among the 16 countries that provided national reports for the ninth session of the Forum, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cyprus, Finland, the Philippines and Switzerland have official languages other than those of the United Nations. Of these countries, Finland and the Philippines have translated the instrument into their official languages.

36. Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument refer to a number of governance-related national and international policies, measures and actions not explicitly mentioned in the global objectives on forests. Some of these may be viewed as cutting across the four global objectives. A number of countries reported actions taken in the following areas, as well as under the global objectives. Since the actions are mentioned above in the context of specific global objectives, a brief summary has been provided for each.

National forest programmes, plans and strategies

37. In many countries, national forest programmes reflect political commitment to sustainable forest management. New Zealand reported on the adoption of a broader approach, comprising a matrix of policies, plans and industry initiatives that are periodically updated as required. Brazil and Ghana reported progress in promoting cross-sectoral coordination on forests in national development planning. Moreover, national forest policies are often formulated and implemented in close cooperation with regional processes. Forest policies, plans and strategies were mentioned as being prepared or revised by several countries:

(a) Finland revised its 2009-2011 strategic programme for the forest sector in 2008, adopted development policy guidelines for the forest sector in 2009 and revised its national forest programme in 2010;

(b) Jamaica has adopted a strategic forest management plan 2010-2014;

(c) Cameroon has developed an industrialization plan for the forestry sector that includes sustainable forest management;

(d) Cyprus is currently preparing a new national forest policy and programme;

(e) The Philippines is currently revising its forest policy (the Sustainable Forest Management Act).

Forest legislation

38. Various countries have undertaken or are undertaking revisions or amendments to strengthen national forest legislation, particularly in terms of governance and law enforcement. El Salvador cited special attention to illegal logging and commerce in forest products. Gabon and Papua New Guinea referred to stringent forest law enforcement policies. Mexico reported having opted for a preventive, rather than a punitive, strategy. A number of African countries cited the importance of signing a voluntary partnership agreement with the European Union on the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan. Mozambique has prepared a manual on promoting law enforcement legislation related to forestry and wildlife. Bangladesh and Brazil are assessing or will assess law enforcement performance, with Bangladesh preparing case studies. Mexico has encouraged private sector participation in certification programmes as an approach to supporting forest law enforcement. The Philippines has intensified forest protection and law enforcement activities in coordination with other law enforcement agencies, local government units, civil society and other stakeholders. In this regard, the Philippines emphasized that the collective implementation of forest law enforcement and governance and related trade processes was essential to ensure the attainment of the global objectives.

Stakeholder participation

39. A significant number of countries have continued to strengthen stakeholder participation through measures implemented since before the adoption of the forest instrument. Bangladesh, Cyprus, El Salvador, Ghana and Mexico reported that they had institutionalized stakeholder participation, with Bangladesh and the Philippines focusing on social forestry and co-management activities through reforms to national forest legislation. El Salvador is establishing a forest consultative board through new forest legislation, and the Philippines is revising its laws on sustainable forest management to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples and their enjoyment of their rights.

40. El Salvador reported that it was working with the private sector and industry to create a more favourable environment for forestry investment. Jamaica reported that a few forest reserves and forest management areas had been established on private lands. In the case of Bangladesh, dialogues with the private sector and industry have been organized to help address conflict resolution. Mexico has strengthened its strategic partnerships with both national and international financial institutions,

while also developing new innovative funding mechanisms and strengthening partnerships with the private sector. In New Zealand, nearly 100 per cent of the timber produced comes from plantation forests, most of which are privately owned. Cameroon is studying how to better utilize forest sector income to fund sustainable forest management. El Salvador is focusing on improving the investment environment for sustainable forest management, including through investment incentives.

41. Many countries reported on mechanisms or initiatives, including capacity-building initiatives, to increase the involvement of indigenous local communities in sustainable forest management programmes. To that end, Bangladesh and the Philippines have prioritized the identification of alternative income-generation activities for indigenous and local communities. New Zealand has set up a fund aimed at the preservation of indigenous knowledge linked to the use and management of natural resources, including forests. A number of countries are addressing the protection of indigenous peoples' legal rights with respect to forest management, including intellectual property rights.

42. As a priority, Bangladesh and Cameroon are monitoring institutional performance regarding stakeholder participation, with Bangladesh conducting a cost-benefit analysis; results are being provided through case studies. Papua New Guinea noted that, despite increased stakeholder participation, there had been little improvement in the livelihoods of people in local communities.

Capacity-building

43. Greater emphasis has been placed on capacity-building, including promoting the participation of country-level staff in training programmes. Among the examples reported: El Salvador has supported more efficient use of fuelwood in rural homes, Gabon has established a woodworking school, and Mozambique has conducted training in the implementation of forest and wildlife legislation for State and community law enforcement agents. Gabon and Mexico have more closely linked their work on capacity-building and technology transfer with that carried out by academia and the Philippines, through community knowledge-sharing workshops and field manuals. Cyprus and Finland are reviewing and restructuring their forestry organizations in order to more effectively address new and emerging issues.

44. Several countries reported on the strengthening of collaboration with universities and research centres. Mexico, for example, has established a fund aimed at catalysing forest research and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, particularly those that contribute to the added value of processed forest products, while Switzerland has initiated a research programme on the impacts of climate change on forests. Other developed countries reported on activities to support capacity-building initiatives in developing countries, often through regional and subregional programmes.

Public awareness-raising and education

45. Public awareness-raising programmes have been launched in several countries. Bangladesh has organized a tree fair, and Cameroon has initiated an information and awareness-raising campaign on its voluntary partnership agreement with the European Union, with similar activities being carried out in the Philippines. Ghana has developed communication strategies that are delivered in the country's local

languages. Mozambique has conducted a public awareness-raising and education campaign on preventing and combating forest fires, while Cyprus has undertaken a study on the planning and conduct of an information campaign on forest fire prevention. Gabon and the Philippines are intensifying activities in this area.

46. Local forest management committees have been critical in promoting public awareness and education on sustainable forest management. However, there is still a need for greater resources and more partnerships with stakeholders, including increased media involvement. Major challenges include reaching adult audiences more effectively and educating the public about the value of forest goods and services.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting

47. A number of countries described monitoring, assessment and reporting activities carried out in the context of regional programmes or projects. Several other countries highlighted measures to conduct national forestry inventories, while a few others reported on the development of forest information management systems. Ghana has established a monitoring and evaluation unit within its forestry commission, including the development of a website for information-sharing. Gabon and Jamaica reported a lack of adequate monitoring, assessment and reporting capabilities.

48. The development of policy guidelines for the forest sector was cited by one country as a means to direct international support for sustainable forest management. Other countries, including Cyprus and Mexico, highlighted existing policy frameworks for addressing monitoring, assessment and reporting functions. In many cases, the strengthening of expertise and capacity in the area of project design was a high priority, in particular to increase access to global financing mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility and proposed REDD mechanisms.

E. Challenges encountered

49. Similar to the challenges described in the context of Ghana's pilot project, obstacles and impediments in implementing the forest instrument, especially financial constraints and greater impacts arising from the unpredictable global economic situation, were identified by developing countries. Finland, for example, identified the current global economic situation and structural changes in its forestry industry as key challenges. Bangladesh, Cameroon, Gabon and Mozambique cited inadequate resources as a major restraint on their capacity to achieve sustainable forest management. Other key points included the need to:

- (a) Strengthen institutional capacities in the forestry sector;
- (b) Resolve conflicting interests among local, state and federal governments;
- (c) Revise and strengthen forest legislation;
- (d) Train forestry personnel;
- (e) More effectively address intersectoral conflicts;

- (f) Increase and diversify the economic benefits of forest goods and services for small-forest owners and indigenous communities;
- (g) Develop accounting and valuation systems that take into account forest goods and services;
- (h) Resolve unsettled land tenure issues;
- (i) Strengthen forest monitoring capabilities;
- (j) Overcome inadequate means of implementation;
- (k) Provide assistance to indigenous peoples.

F. Lessons learned

50. Among the lessons learned in implementing the forest instrument, the following were highlighted:

- (a) National forest plans, supported by sound forestry legislation, continue to serve as effective vehicles for the sustainable use of forest goods and services;
- (b) Existing criteria and indicators with respect to good forest management practices provide a coherent and useful reference framework for sustainable forest management;
- (c) Positive results supporting sustainable forest management have been achieved from meetings with local communities on the establishment and application of mechanisms for the adequate valuation of the costs and benefits of the services provided by forests;
- (d) National tree-planting events have helped to raise public awareness of the importance of managing and protecting of forest resources and their biological diversity;
- (e) Monitoring and analysing the relationship between cross-cutting concerns regarding forest law enforcement and governance and related trade processes and the Forum's thematic issues and sustainable forest management objectives are essential to ensuring the effective implementation of the forest instrument.

G. Support provided by regional and subregional organizations

51. In the annex to resolution 7/1, on the Forum's multi-year work programme for the period 2007-2015, relevant regional and subregional forest-related entities are invited to address issues and agenda items planned for each Forum session, including progress made in implementing the forest instrument and the four global objectives on forests. Fifteen regional and subregional entities submitted reports for consideration at the Forum's ninth session. Most inputs recognized the forest instrument as an important international achievement in the promotion of sustainable forest management. Similarly, the four global objectives have been taken into account in regional policy decision-making and implementation through various entities. Many entities reported on activities that had directly contributed to the implementation of the forest instrument and the global objectives. For example, a

draft protocol to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, on sustainable forest management, takes into account the forest instrument and the four global objectives. The draft protocol will be considered for adoption by the States parties to the Convention in 2011. A synthesis of these reports will be provided in the report of the Secretary-General on regional and subregional inputs (E/CN.18/2011/3).

V. Future reporting

52. The tasks for future sessions of the Forum, as laid out in the Forum's multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2015, will require innovative approaches if the reporting burden on Member States is to be prevented from growing. Future reporting opportunities with respect to the Forum also include the provision of input to the process related to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012 (Rio+20 Conference). In addition, the tenth session of the Forum, in 2013, will focus on the overall theme of forests and economic development. At its eleventh session, in 2015, the Forum will review, *inter alia*, progress in implementing the forest instrument and the contribution of forests to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To assist the Forum in its 2015 review, the Forum secretariat has been requested to prepare, in collaboration with FAO, analytical consolidated reports based on, *inter alia*, voluntary country reports.

53. Information provided by Member States in voluntary national reports will therefore make an essential contribution to the Forum's discussions in 2013 on forests and economic development and to its assessment and review in 2015, as well as to other relevant processes such as Rio+20 and post-2010 activities related to the Millennium Development Goals. In view of the fact that relatively few countries submitted reports for the ninth session of the Forum, the following activities to facilitate future reporting are planned or under way, in accordance with paragraphs 2 (b) (i) and 4 (c) of the resolution adopted by the Forum at its eighth session:

(a) On the basis of experience gained through voluntary national reports submitted in 2008 and 2010 using suggested formats, the current reporting format will be further streamlined and integrated, drawing on existing forest reporting formats and indicators, so as to reduce reporting burdens while still generating the information needed for consolidated analysis. In consultation with FAO and with other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the secretariat will prepare guidelines for streamlined national reporting for the Forum's tenth session;

(b) Germany is providing support, through FAO and the National Forest Programme Facility, for three additional pilot projects on the implementation of the forest instrument in Liberia, Nicaragua and the Philippines, building on experience gained through the Ghana pilot project;

(c) Japan has agreed to contribute up to \$1.59 million to assist interested countries in reporting, for the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Forum, on progress made in the implementation of the forest instrument. The project is expected to begin in March 2011 and will be implemented by FAO, in close collaboration with the National Forest Programme Facility and the Forum secretariat;

(d) The Forum secretariat is planning a four-year project (2012-2015) to be implemented through the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, under the United Nations Development Account in the amount of \$527,000, to help strengthen national reporting in support of the implementation of the forest instrument.

VI. Conclusions

54. The voluntary national reports submitted during the preparation of the present report reflect the interconnections between the global objectives on forests and the forest instrument, as well as interlinkages among the global objectives. Actions reported as having contributed to the attainment of a particular global objective are also relevant to the implementation of one or more aspects of paragraphs 6 and 7 of the instrument and, in many cases, have contributed to the attainment of other global objectives. Furthermore, reporting revealed a number of governance and related policies and actions that cut across the four global objectives.

55. Most countries that have submitted reports are introducing or strengthening measures and other actions to implement the forest instrument, including by attaining the global objectives on forests, through, *inter alia*, reforestation and forest restoration, efforts to address threats to forest health, improved governance and law enforcement, and increased stakeholder participation. These measures and actions often build on existing initiatives to implement the previous proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and more recent resolutions and decisions of the Forum. Therefore, elements of the forest instrument may already be reflected in forest-related legislative and policy frameworks for achieving sustainable forest management, such as national forest programmes and plans and related strategies.

56. As the Ghana pilot project indicates, the forest instrument can provide a useful overarching framework for national action and international cooperation aimed at sustainable forest management. It has shown promise for application in other countries as well: three countries, in Africa, Latin America and Asia, will soon join the pilot effort. Donors are to be congratulated on their support for this comprehensive approach. Countries stand to learn a great deal through such an in-depth and comprehensive systematic method of implementing the forest instrument and the four global objectives. Broadening these efforts to additional countries, however, will depend on international support and funding availability.

57. Developing countries generally face a range of obstacles in implementing the forest instrument and achieving its purpose. These include financial and human resource constraints and the inadequate valuation of forest goods and services, as well as challenges linked to improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people and increasing the economic benefits of forests through the added value of the local processing and manufacturing of forest products. The fragmentation within Governments of responsibility for forests is a major reason for some of the gaps in implementation.

58. Voluntary reporting by a significantly greater number of Member States will be needed in 2013 and 2015 to permit an overall assessment of progress. While a number of initiatives by donors and the Forum secretariat in this regard are planned or under way, significant additional financial support will be required so that all requests can be responded to.

59. In view of the scope of the assessment and review to be conducted in 2015, additional voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund will be needed in order to support the secretariat's efforts to prepare analytical consolidated reports and other background materials requested by the Forum.

VII. Recommendations

60. The Forum may wish to:

(a) **Decide that voluntary national reporting for the tenth session of the Forum will focus on the overall theme of forests and economic development;**

(b) **Welcome the initiatives by Germany, Ghana, Japan, Liberia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, FAO, the National Forest Programme Facility and the Forum secretariat to pilot the implementation of the forest instrument and assist countries in reporting progress;**

(c) **Invite members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and request the Forum secretariat to enhance efforts to support, on request, the efforts of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to prepare voluntary reports for the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Forum;**

(d) **Invite FAO to consider how it can further incorporate, into its reporting on the state of the world's forests and on the Global Forest Resources Assessment Programme, the elements of the forest instrument and the global objectives on forests aimed at efficient reporting by Member States;**

(e) **Encourage donor countries and other countries in a position to do so, financial institutions and other organizations to make voluntary financial contributions to the Forum trust fund to enable the Forum secretariat to effectively assist, on request, developing countries and countries with economies in transition in preparing voluntary reports for the Forum's assessment and review to be conducted in 2015;**

(f) **Encourage Member States and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to initiate and support, as requested by Member States, additional pilot projects on the implementation of the forest instrument.**

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Regional and subregional inputs**Regional and subregional inputs****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report highlights the importance given by regional and subregional entities to the social component of sustainable forest management and points out that forest-dependent people benefit from everything that forests have to offer, including livelihoods. At the regional level, there is an effort to enhance the participation of all stakeholders in decision-making, awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives. It is clear that marshalling the means of implementation, especially funding, remains a major challenge. The report emphasizes that sustainable forest management can be widely implemented in all regions and would enhance people's livelihoods. Finally, the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the four global objectives contained therein are being taken into account universally in the design and implementation of policies, as well as providing a basis for new instruments at the regional and subregional levels.

* E/CN.18/2011/L.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Overview	3
III. Substantive matters to be considered by the Forum	4
A. Assessment of progress made in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the achievement of the four global objectives on forests	4
B. Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication	7
C. International Year of Forests, 2011	15
D. Regional cooperation and partnerships	15
IV. Lessons learned	17
Annex	
Regional and subregional entities providing inputs to the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests	19

I. Introduction

1. The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests,¹ in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49, sets a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. In paragraph 2 (c) of resolution 2006/49, the Council agreed to strengthen interaction between the Forum and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes,² with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.

2. In the Forum's programme of work, relevant regional and subregional entities are invited to address issues and agenda items planned for each Forum session and to submit a concise summary of their deliberations to the Forum secretariat prior to the session. Such entities are also invited to contribute to the discussions of the Forum sessions, according to their respective mandates, while the Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report summarizing the entities' submissions. The first such report of the Secretary-General was prepared for the eighth session of the Forum (E/CN.18/2009/3).

3. To facilitate the submission of inputs for the current session, the Forum secretariat prepared an information note and a questionnaire. The present report summarizes the submissions received from the entities listed in the annex to the report.

II. Overview

4. The responses to the questionnaire sent out by the Forum secretariat were prepared in a variety of ways. Some were prepared by secretariats following the general guidelines provided by Governments and other partners. Others based on the results of a specific meeting organized by entities to discuss their contributions. Some United Nations economic commissions took advantage of the outcomes of regional meetings on matters related to the Commission on Sustainable Development in order to prepare their inputs. In the Central African region, the various entities coordinated with the Central African Forests Commission. A few entities tried to involve civil society in the preparation of their reports to the Forum.

5. The responses clearly reveal that the forest instrument (see General Assembly resolution 62/98) and the four global objectives contained therein are being taken into account universally in the design and implementation of policies, as well as a basis for new instruments.

6. As far as the social aspect of sustainable forest management goes, the responding regional and subregional entities were convinced that forests should benefit the people who depend on them for their livelihoods, but progress differs among the reporting regions and the integration of livelihoods into sustainable forest

¹ E/2007/42-E/CN.18/2007/B, chap. I, sect. C, resolution 7/1, annex.

² Forest-related mechanisms, institutions, instruments, organizations and processes are referred to as "entities" in the present report.

management programmes is affected by economic, social and historical aspects that should be taken into consideration in the global forest policy dialogue.

7. It was also noted that, at the regional level, there is an effort to enhance the participation of all stakeholders in decision-making, awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives. The entities seem to be more and more convinced that the involvement of a multitude of partners is necessary if progress is to be achieved. Further investment in the engagement and empowerment of multiple stakeholders is desired and will change the way business is being done.

8. Regarding means of implementation, in particular financing, the challenge is in making sure that sustainable forest management can be widely implemented in all regions and, consequently, enhance people's livelihoods. However, there is a need to look holistically at forest sustainability, not losing track of the linkages between the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable forest management.

III. Substantive matters to be considered by the Forum

A. Assessment of progress made in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the achievement of the four global objectives on forests

9. The entities agreed that the forest instrument is an important international accomplishment in the promotion of sustainable forest management and is already having an impact in the field. The instrument addresses all issues related to forests in a coherent manner and the four global objectives on forests are being taken into account for policy decision-making and implementation in the various regions and subregions.

10. The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet) framework document states that the Network is intended to support the multi-year work of the United Nations Forum on Forests, as well as the implementation of the forest instrument and the four global objectives on forests. Thus, it can be said that the mission of the Network is to regionally promote sustainable forest management within the framework of the forest instrument.

11. It is interesting to note that three regional entities — the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention), the Central African Forests Commission and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Forest Europe) — are considering or have recently developed a legally binding instrument on forests. During the elaboration of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention, the provisions of the forest instrument and the four global objectives on forests were taken into account.

12. Forest Europe is considering the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on forests in the pan-European region. Two working groups are currently exploring the potential added value of and possible options for a legally binding agreement on forests in the pan-European region, and preparing options for a decision on such an agreement. A non-paper on the subject is expected and the issue will be considered at the sixth Ministerial Conference, to be held in Oslo from 14 to 16 June 2011.

Forest Europe also forwarded to the Secretariat an analytical table comparing the main points of the forest instrument with previous commitments of the Ministerial Conference. Since these might serve as the basis for an eventual legally binding instrument, it is possible that the thrust of the forest instrument might be incorporated into a future regional convention.

13. The joint Forestry and Timber Section of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) collects and validates information related to forest resources, as well as policies and institutions to assess progress made and challenges remaining in forest management. The ECE/FAO integrated programme of work, with its activities in the areas of forest product markets, resources, policies and institutions as well as outlook, is directly contributing to the implementation of the forest instrument and the four global objectives on forests, notably as they concern sustainable forest management and forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits.

14. The Economic Community of Central African States stressed the importance of projects currently being developed or implemented by Central African States in collaboration with various bodies, aimed at the achievement of the four global objectives. These include the mobilization of funding by the Economic Community, the Central African Forests Commission and the Global Mechanism for the implementation of the subregional plan of action against desertification and land degradation in Central Africa; the implementation of the Programme in Support of the Conservation of Congo Basin Ecosystems, which contributes to the strengthening of economic, social and environmental aspects of the targeted landscapes; the development of lines of cooperation, particularly with the African Development Bank, the European Union and the International Tropical Timber Organization in order to mobilize new and additional financial resources; and the implementation of the regional project on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation with funding from the World Bank (Global Environment Facility project) in six Congo Basin countries.

15. The Réseau des parlementaires pour la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale — Conférence ministérielle sur les écosystèmes des forêts denses humides d'Afrique Centrale (REPAR-CEFDHAC) refers to the legally binding agreement of the Central African Forests Commission, adopted on 26 October 2008 in Brazzaville, which deals with the administrative, legal, technical, economic, social and environmental aspects of conservation and use of forests. The agreement benefited from the strong and comprehensive participation of members of parliaments in its negotiation. It aims at promoting the development, conservation and sustainable management of the forests of Central Africa, as well as the trade in forest products. Those objectives are being pursued mainly through the Central African Forests Commission.

16. The responses demonstrate that all Central African States are strongly committed to the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the four global objectives in respect of all types of forests through the strengthening of regional cooperation and the promotion of the trade in products from sustainably managed forests.

17. The secretariat of the Central African Forests Commission adds, in this regard, that the Commission's member States have been committed since 1999 to the sustainable management of their forests. On top of existing subregional instruments

and mechanisms, those countries implement the forest instrument and have incorporated its essence, as well as the global objectives on forests, into their national and subregional planning frameworks. The commitment of countries, accompanied by strong action, has already provided visible progress in the sustainable management of Central African forests.

18. As reported by the International Model Forest Network, most model forests are very biologically diverse, and often include landscape areas with significant conservation or preservation values, such as national parks and world heritage forests containing species at risk. By promoting a landscape-level approach, model forests foster a reduction in forest fragmentation, enhanced wildlife habitat and the development of collaborative strategies with local communities for managing biodiversity, contributing to the implementation of global objective 1. Objectives 2 and 3 are dealt with by the implementation of sustainable forest management strategies which enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent populations, as well as by the establishment of successful local enterprises. Those activities, by contributing to both sustainability and the generation of income for forest-based communities throughout the Network, show that the pursuit of economic opportunity is not incompatible with environmental conservation.

19. A non-legally binding entity, the Montreal Process, launched in 1994, predates the forest instrument. Member countries represent about 90 per cent of the world's temperate and boreal forests, which equates to 60 per cent of all of the forests of the world. In 1995, member countries developed 7 criteria and 67 indicators, revised in 2007, as guidelines for assessing forest trends and progress towards sustainable forest management. Member countries continue to work on the implementation of the Montreal Process criteria and indicators and, through this process, support the intent of the forest instrument.

20. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) is developing and implementing at the regional level initiatives and projects which directly contribute to the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the four global objectives. Similar to APFNet, the entity has the mission of promoting cooperation with and among its Parties and does that by supporting the implementation at the national and regional level of international commitments, in particular the forest instrument.

21. Regarding global objective 1, for instance, a project that aims at monitoring deforestation and land use change in the Amazon forest helps ACTO member States to improve governance through the development of forest-cover national monitoring plans with a common regional methodology. An initiative to harmonize criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management seeks to strengthen the complementarities of the Tarapoto criteria and indicators and those approved by the International Tropical Timber Organization.

22. With reference to global objective 4, ACTO notes that a significant part of the financial support the entity receives for its activities come from Governments of countries which belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. ACTO also promotes a financial initiative which aims at developing and consolidating financial mechanisms composed of investments and payments for environmental services, as well as the development of methodologies and shared tools regarding the role of forests in climate change.

23. Some entities mentioned the importance of properly accounting in national economies for the effective contribution of the economic, social and environmental benefits of forests. This has been identified by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) as one of the key issues to be tackled in the near future, and it is important that the forest sector work with national development planning, statistical and other authorities to identify the qualitative and quantitative contributions of forestry to poverty alleviation and thus support enhanced integration of forestry plans into national development plans.

24. The contribution of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community to the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the four global objectives can be seen in the organization of activities raising awareness of international forest activities. From 12 to 15 October 2009 the Secretariat brought together representatives of Governments and major groups in a regional workshop on policy processes for the sustainable management of forest resources in the Pacific, held in Nadi, Fiji. The workshop introduced good practices from other parts of the world, tailored to the specific situations and developments of Pacific island countries.

25. The West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) assisted three member States (Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger) in obtaining funding from the European Union for the implementation of a regional park programme, which will be extended to Togo. Moreover, the creation of a foundation aiming at raising funds for the promotion of the sustainable management of savannah ecosystems in the UEMOA area has been proposed. In the framework of its agriculture policy, the Union has established an agriculture development fund which contributes to activities related to the sustainable management of forests.

B. Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication

26. All regional entities emphasized that forests need to be sustainably managed to serve the multiple functions of forests for the good of people's livelihoods. The focus on people is clear, even though it is implemented in different manners. Through its joint expert network on implementing sustainable forest management, for instance, the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section addresses a variety of social and cultural aspects including working conditions, contract labour and training standards and networks.

27. APFNet states that the Asia-Pacific region, a dynamic region with rapid development and large forested areas, home to more than half the world population, is a special example of how forests contribute to people. The entity promotes sustainable forest management through various means, including forest rehabilitation, capacity-building, information sharing and regional policy dialogue, as well as pilot projects.

28. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership reports that Congo Basin forest countries have undertaken serious efforts aimed at improving forest-dependent people's livelihoods and investment conditions for forest concession holders. While community-based forest management for production forests is still poorly developed in the region, concessions adjacent to communities and marginalized forest communities are beginning to benefit from forest certification. The Forest Stewardship Council standards and principles require logging companies to respect

traditional land rights and indigenous peoples and take care of the social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities. According to the Council, some 5 million hectares of forests are certified in the region (878,896 hectares in Cameroon, 1,873,505 in Gabon and 1,907,843 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), making up more than 10 per cent of the 41,636,677 hectares of production forests mapped out into concessions and thus making the Congo Basin the largest certified natural forest block in the world. A regional Council standard has been developed through intensive stakeholder consultations throughout 2009, and is about to be validated.

29. According to the secretariat of the Central African Forests Commission, some of its member States have adopted legislation over the past 10 years to strengthen the contribution of forests to the fight against poverty. Community-based forestry initiatives now exist in those countries and, progressively, throughout the subregion. Giving back a portion of royalties or forestry taxes to the local and riparian communities is one way in which Governments of the subregion contribute to the fight against poverty. However, one of the main challenges in the eradication of poverty relates to capacity-building: to ensure the training of stakeholders in local techniques and tools for sustainable forest management, and in the marketing of forest products.

30. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community reports that in the larger Melanesian countries, forests provide significant revenues, employment and livelihoods. In the smaller island States and the atolls, the limited forest and tree resources provide people with food, medicines, construction materials and fuel wood. In spite of all of these benefits, the sustainable management of the resource continues to be a major challenge and significant forest loss and degradation continues. Emerging global issues including the international financial crisis and climate change have created a more complex set of challenges for Pacific islanders to overcome.

31. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community, in collaboration with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), has assisted Fiji in revising its 1950 forest policy to ensure that a sound and sustainable forest management system is adopted and that the aspirations of the resource owners regarding the management of their resources are met. Similarly, the Government of Vanuatu is holding provincial and national consultations with assistance and support from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and GTZ with a view to reformulating its forest policy to best reflect the interests of the people of Vanuatu.

32. ECA is intensifying its work in the climate change arena in order to ensure that forests are for people. It is working with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank for the full implementation of their joint Climate for Development in Africa Programme. The Programme sets out to scale up the capacities of key institutions and stakeholders with a view to improving climate-related data and observation, information services, policies, investment processes and risk-management practices in climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, water, forests and other natural resources, energy and health.

33. The ECA-based African Climate Policy Centre serves as the knowledge-management, policy and project-facilitation arm of the Climate for Development in Africa Programme. The Centre's work on climate change information, policy analysis and advocacy is expected to enhance awareness and strengthen the capacities of member States and regional and subregional bodies to better integrate

climate concerns into development, hopefully resulting in the elaboration and implementation by member States of national development policies, strategies and programmes, including poverty reduction strategies, that integrate and prioritize climate change concerns. At the same time, development and implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative continues. This initiative is a priority action of the African Union-European Union Partnership on Climate Change and has evolved from tree planting to the promotion of sustainable land management practices focusing on the Saharan and Sahel dryland ecosystems.

34. In Africa there is poor coordination and collaboration among actors, as well as a lack of in-depth understanding and appreciation of sustainable forest and land management issues. Moreover, there is inadequate reform and enforcement of policies and legislation to guarantee clear legal ownership and access rights to land, water and other natural resources. Finally, the lack of financial resources is systemic and is one of the most burdensome constraints on most countries and regional programmes in the implementation of sustainable forest and land management programmes.

35. The Economic Community of Central African States reports that forest-dependent people have much to gain if forests can generate more economic income and if forest governance is improved. Voluntary partnership agreement negotiations in the context of the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan, as well as the efforts of companies to obtain certification, should be stimulated. Information should be shared and made available to all, and forest laws should be enforced. Capacity should be built and, in this regard, a special need is identified for climate change.

36. ACTO facilitates cooperation among its parties in the Amazon region through pilot projects intended to (a) promote the sustainable development of the region with emphasis on the improvement of the quality of life of local communities; (b) generate inputs for the national and regional political dialogue with emphasis on the practice of cooperation processes; (c) record and disseminate lessons learned, results and impacts; (d) assess the possibility of initiatives' replication; and (e) serve as concrete instruments of action of regional cooperation on forests.

37. The participation of stakeholders in the management of forests is stimulated through several specific projects. Moreover, all of the projects developed and implemented by the entity, especially those of an economic nature, take into account the social and cultural aspects of the different indigenous and local communities who benefit from them. Finally, through its indigenous issues coordination, ACTO provides dialogue opportunities which, in the past, helped in the drafting of the Indigenous Regional Agenda.

1. Community-based forest management

38. Community-based forest management is a priority for regional and subregional entities. While some invest in awareness-raising and capacity-building, others develop specific models and indicators. The objectives, however, are the same and include the promotion of broad stakeholder participation and management coordination. In the case of the Carpathian Convention, the latter is being encouraged by the establishment of private owner associations.

39. According to APFNet, in most countries of the Asia-Pacific region, especially developing countries, farmers account for a large portion of the national population, while forested lands cover larger areas than those used for agriculture. Thus, community-based forests play an indispensable role in supporting farmers' survival and the improvement of their livelihoods. APFNet promotes training workshops on forestry and rural development to enhance capacity in the region and to provide a platform for sharing knowledge and practical experiences to improve community-based forest management, including forest land tenure.

40. APFNet also financially supports pilot projects in the region to showcase good practices in terms of community-based forest management in rural areas. Experiences and lessons learned are included in publications and brochures distributed in the region and beyond. Finally, APFNet is now engaged in a five-year collaboration with the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific to promote community-based forest management.

41. The Montreal Process member countries published in 2007 the third edition of the Montreal Process criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests. That edition contained a number of indicators related to community-based forest management, specifically the resilience of forest-dependent communities (indicator 6.3.c), the area and percentage of forests used for subsistence purposes (indicator 6.3.d) and the distribution of revenues derived from forest management (indicator 6.3.e). Each individual Montreal Process member country, in preparing its Montreal Process country report, has the option of reporting against these indicators.

42. According to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the community-based and participatory approach for sustainable forest management is seen as imperative in the Pacific, where the majority of land is customarily owned. Forests and trees play an important role in the economic, environmental social and cultural well-being of the Pacific community. The Secretariat initiated its "Drawa Model" for community-based natural resource management in 1997 in cooperation with GTZ and the Fiji Forestry Department. The Drawa Model promotes a community-based management system, defining a timber harvesting regime that is not only socially and environmentally appropriate but economically viable. Participatory assessment of community needs and wants, analysis of the socio-economic, gender and customary and environmental status and technical inventories and surveys of forest resources all form the basis for action plans and activities that are relevant, acceptable and truly reflective of the local community's interests.

43. Community-based forest management is a priority for many of the resource-dependent communities located throughout the International Model Forest Network. Model Forest stakeholders prioritize the involvement of local people in decision-making processes, viewing their active participation as key to achieving sustainability, including realization of sustainable and meaningful incomes for forest-based communities. Over 40 Model Forest sites are involved in economic activities including community sustainability/economic development efforts, eco-cultural tourism, education and capacity-building and the cultivation of non-timber forest products that support communities and livelihoods and reduce poverty.

44. For example, the Ngao Model Forest, located in central Thailand's Lampang province, promotes community-based forest management to encourage local

communities' involvement in the conservation of nearby forests and the practice of sustainable forest management to enable livelihood development. The local communities' capacity to support the management and improvement of forest resources. Rules for sustainable utilization and equal benefit-sharing of forest resources have been developed on the basis of mutual agreement. Non-timber forest products such as bamboo shoots, mushrooms and medicinal and edible plants from managed forests will guarantee food security and supplies for sustainable economic development of local communities.

45. In the Central African context, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership reports that countries are encouraged to develop appropriate policy frameworks for community-based forest use and timber transformation. The regional office of the Centre for International Forestry Research is very much engaged on this topic. It is, however, difficult to engage the forest-dependent communities in an organized dialogue. It is hoped that in some countries the voluntary partnership agreement negotiations in the context of the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan will trigger additional stakeholder participation in the forest sector. The International Union for Conservation of Nature has facilitated voluntary partnership agreement negotiation processes in a number of countries.

46. REPAR-CEFDHAC has as its main mission to ensure good governance in the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in Central Africa. This is a difficult task because the Congo Basin forests are subject to many interventions by a multitude of actors with sometimes conflicting objectives. Throughout the years much has been achieved in the region in terms of policy and mentality change. However, it is very clear from historical observation that successful sustainable management of those forests can only be achieved with the involvement of active and informed stakeholders. No doubt the various national Governments have important roles to play through, for instance, proper taxation and use of economic instruments.

2. Social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure

47. As mentioned above (see para. 35), APFNet gives attention to the issue of forest land tenure. The 2010 training workshop on forestry and rural development focused on forest land tenure reform, as this issue has proven to be an effective means of mobilizing farmers for the protection and good management of forests to improve their livelihoods. Many countries in the region, including China and Viet Nam, are accumulating constructive experiences in land tenure security and reforms. In addition, APFNet and the Research Centre of Forestry Economy of the State Forestry Administration of China are jointly working on a book, to be published soon, entitled *Forest Land Tenure Reform in China*, which showcases the progress achieved and lessons learned in the reform process in China, emphasizing the importance of having farmers and forest workers actively involved at all stages.

48. In the Carpathian countries, the traditional pattern of small- and medium-sized forest properties has been lost during the period of State control of forests, along with knowledge of forest management. Currently the restitution process — the return of the State-owned forests to their original owners is taking place in that region, to various degrees. The “new” owners, lacking proper knowledge and in light of the economic difficulties, are prone to clear their forests for other land uses,

in order to make a rapid economic gain. Thus, education, capacity-building, coordination and financial incentives for the new forest owners are critical to ensuring sustainable forest management practices.

49. In this regard, the Carpathian Convention countries' forest policies include some form of assistance and capacity-building for the forest owners. In addition, most countries' policies incorporate public participation and information in their decision-making processes, through platforms for dialogue among stakeholders and people interested in forest use and conservation. However, in practice no efficient mechanisms for public information and participation are in place. During the elaboration of the Protocol to the Carpathian Convention (see para. 11 above), the need for cooperation between national institutions and regional and local authorities and involving communities and forest owners and managers directly in development and implementation of the forestry policy was highlighted.

50. The secretariat of the Central African Forests Commission reports that the Commission recently elaborated subregional guidelines on the participation of local and indigenous communities in forest management. Those guidelines will be submitted for adoption during the next ministerial council of the Commission. Several issues should be dealt with in order to properly include those communities in the decision-making process and in the management of forests, such as the absence or insufficiency of a legal framework to ensure the rights of indigenous communities and questions regarding land tenure.

51. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership informs the Forum that Congo Basin forest countries have made serious efforts to implement forest sector reforms aimed at improving forest-dependent peoples' livelihoods and investment conditions for forest concession holders. As an example, the review of forest land titles in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was concluded in February 2009. Forest law enforcement can be enhanced by engaging all stakeholders and raising awareness of regional conservation and sustainable management policies among potential buyers. To encourage continued investment in the forestry sector and secure regional and international markets for sustainably produced, legal forest products, and at the same time enhance the credibility of forest certification, several donors are financing extensive forest certification promotion projects in the region.

52. REPAR-CEFDHAC closely follows the governance, taxation and benefits received from the forests by local and indigenous communities in the Central African countries. Generally speaking, the decentralized management of forests has spread rapidly in the region. Owing to the failure of centralized management to improve the welfare of the local and indigenous populations, certain powers were passed to local communities through new policies and legislation. This new trend has certainly contributed to the alleviation of poverty in the local and indigenous communities. However, if those benefits are to be maximized, local governance mechanisms should be improved and more transparency is needed.

53. According to the International Model Forest Network, indigenous partners bring a unique understanding of the forest ecosystem, one developed over centuries of close contact with the land. With both traditional and contemporary forest experiences, indigenous peoples are well positioned to contribute to today's sustainable forest management practices for the benefit of their communities and others. Indeed, model forest stakeholders recognize that without the involvement of indigenous partners the sustainable development of forest-dependent communities is

unlikely to occur. Over 20 model forest sites include active indigenous participation in various forms, including representation on the Board of Directors; the design of forest management plans aimed at reducing deforestation and illegal logging; and the development of the model forest's strategic plan.

54. The International Model Forest Network reports that government representatives from boreal countries have identified climate change, biodiversity and aboriginal issues as policy priorities. Through collaborative research between the Prince Albert model forest (Canada) and Vilhelmina model forest (Sweden), aboriginal perspectives on climate change and caribou/reindeer habitat in the circumboreal forest are being sought and an analysis of knowledge gaps surrounding these three issues and their interactions is providing policy-relevant information required for the development of adaptation strategies for northern communities. This information is of interest to aboriginal people of the circumboreal North whose lifestyles are or may soon be affected by changing climate. Industries such as mining, forestry, tourism and peat extraction will also derive benefits from the information generated in this research, as they are impacted by climate change and biodiversity issues and need to be involved in adaptation strategies.

55. The third edition of the Montreal Process criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests contains indicators related to social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure, specifically indicators 6.3.c (resilience of forest-dependent communities) and 7.1.a (property rights, land tenure arrangements, customary and traditional rights of indigenous people and means of resolving property disputes by due process). Each individual Montreal Process member country, in preparing its Montreal Process country report, has the option of reporting against these indicators.

3. Social and cultural aspects

56. Forests serve a multitude of economic and social functions. APFNet aims to promote sustainable forest management as a means of enhancing the role that forests play in social development. It is hoping to help build a platform of cultural exchange in the region that can foster better understanding among stakeholders.

57. The Carpathian countries place great importance on preserving and supporting the cultural and social dimension of forests. Their policies thus tend to maintain and enhance various functions of forests, such as recreational and tourism activities. The unique traditional and cultural heritage of the Carpathians is especially well-preserved in the rural areas, which provides an opportunity for tourism development but also a challenge to ensure its sustainability. On the local level, the non-timber uses of the forest, such as the collection of berries, mushrooms and medicinal plants, contribute to people's livelihoods.

58. In the elaboration of the Protocol to the Carpathian Convention (see para. 11 above), the need for countries to relate forest management policies to other policies, including rural development, tourism, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, as well as biodiversity conservation and spatial planning, was taken into account.

59. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership states that it is often hard to define cultural heritage, to distinguish, for instance, between poaching and traditional hunting. In modern times, indigenous communities tend to lose their traditional

knowledge, but new technologies can help them to preserve and transfer it. Therefore, the exchange of information among stakeholders is important for this aspect of sustainable forest management.

60. According to Forest Europe, after the adoption of the resolution on social and cultural dimensions of sustainable forest management at the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in Vienna in 2003, a set of scientific guidelines, published by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations in 2007, was developed to facilitate the implementation of social and cultural values in sustainable forest management throughout the pan-European region.

61. Model forests are based on a flexible approach that combines the social, cultural and economic needs of local communities with the long-term sustainability of forest landscapes. According to the International Model Forest Network, model forests, by offering a platform for the free flow of ideas, data and resources for informed decision-making about economic alternatives to current practices, provide the opportunity for those traditionally left out of the decision-making process to have an equal voice around the discussion table. Most sites include indigenous peoples in their stakeholder base and work towards a common vision for sustainability that takes indigenous history, culture and knowledge into account. That allows for the sharing of experiences and lessons learned while promoting initiatives that reconcile economic priorities, social concerns and environmental considerations.

62. The third edition of the Montreal Process criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests contains indicators related to the social and cultural aspects of forests, specifically indicators 6.5.a (area and per cent of forests managed primarily to protect the range of cultural, social and spiritual needs and values), 6.5.b (the importance of forests to people) and 7.1.e (management of forests to conserve special environmental, cultural, social and/or scientific values). Each Montreal Process member country, in preparing its Montreal Process country report, has the option of reporting against these indicators.

63. One of the concerns in modern forestry is the conciliation of conservation aspects with social and cultural development. The member States of the Central African Forests Commission place great importance on the social and cultural aspects of forest management and include local communities in the decision-making process. However, it is challenging to deal with competing uses of the same space by different economic activities (mining, agriculture and forestry) and, in this as well as in other contexts, the capacity of local actors has to be further built.

64. So far, REPAR-CEFDHAC considers that the participation of rural populations in the management and conservation of forest ecosystems is very low and the benefits they accrue from the use of their forest heritage are minimal. The involvement of local people in the drafting of management plans is still not sufficient, economic aspects are favoured to the detriment of social ones; and intellectual property rights related to traditional knowledge are not fully taken into account. In this regard, REPAR-CEFDHAC has encouraged member parliaments to address issues related to the incorporation of social and cultural aspects in sustainable forest management.

C. International Year of Forests, 2011

65. Several regional and subregional entities sent inputs regarding the International Year of Forests, 2011. Those inputs will appear in the Secretary-General's report on the issue to the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

D. Regional cooperation and partnerships

66. Each entity has its own objectives, mandate, composition and procedures. However, there are commonalities, such as the fact that all of them work to some degree with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which is a part of the international arrangement on forests. CPF member organizations are seen as fundamental in supporting the promotion of sustainable forest management, the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the four global objectives.

67. All the regional and subregional partners of the Forum on Forests reiterated their support for open and transparent decision-making processes including, whenever possible, the participation of civil society. All entities prioritize capacity-building and awareness-raising as tools to achieve the promotion of sustainable forest management and many organize activities involving all stakeholders. ACTO, for instance, aims at building the capacity of national organizations in charge of forest management so that they can properly contribute to the coordinated regional effort.

68. The mission of APFNet to promote regional sustainable forest management is realized through capacity-building, information-sharing and pilot projects, through which efforts are made to enhance regional cooperation to pave the way for sustainable forest management. Drawing on regional and international expertise to contribute to thematic training for long-term development, APFNet has launched a scholarship programme offering opportunities to foresters and researchers for postgraduate education in the Asia-Pacific region.

69. The Carpathian Convention is in the process of developing an education and awareness-raising and information-sharing component, to support and complement already existing transboundary initiatives and promote a regional-level approach, including in regard to scientific exchange.

70. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership supports the Central African Forests Commission and Central African delegates in building capacity for international negotiations. It works towards a coherent regional vision by channelling support to individual countries through the thematic working groups of the Forests Commission and by sharing information with other partners. It also aims to improve knowledge on forests and people by producing and disseminating information about the Congo Basin forest ecosystems and livelihood systems.

71. REPAR-CEFDHAC emphasizes the need to take into account all uses of forests and how they interact with one another, as well as the work and priorities of other regional entities, such as the Central African Forests Commission, in order to build capacity and raise awareness of the various actors. The mining industry in forest areas, for instance, can help to improve the livelihoods of the local and indigenous people, but also brings new social and environmental aspects to the

equation. It may also interact with more traditional activities such as agriculture and cattle-raising.

72. Capacity-building activities by ECE, in cooperation with FAO, have played a catalytic role in addressing countries' efforts to achieve sustainable forest management by addressing topical themes for the different regions, such as wood energy, forest products marketing and corporate social responsibility in South-East Europe; and policy developments and institutional reform in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

73. An important lesson learned is that close cooperation with actors in the European forestry sphere is crucial to ensure the effective outreach and impact of capacity-building activities in countries throughout the ECE region.

74. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), together with other regional partners, has been promoting capacity-building in the area of payment for environmental services. Lessons learned from the experience include the importance of sharing country experiences (see para. 85 below).

75. Communication and capacity-building have been great strengths of the Montreal Process since its inception. Sharing of experiences and knowledge has enabled the development and application of the entity's criteria and indicators framework used by all member countries. For example, through the International Model Forest Network, Argentina, Canada, Chile, China and Russia are collaborating on methods to demonstrate sustainable forest management using the Montreal Process criteria and indicators.

76. As far as financial support is concerned, most entities rely on official donors as well as regional and world development banks for their funding; some are able to obtain funds from private contributors as well. All agree, however, that more funding is needed and many see hope in obtaining new and additional resources through mechanisms such as REDD-plus.

77. For the Carpathian Convention, the majority of transnational projects are funded by the various programmes of the European Union funds for territorial cooperation. National financing is provided by the forest sector itself, through timber export, managed at large by the State forestry enterprises, as well as by the ministries of environment and ministries of agriculture, which are indirectly supporting sustainable forest development through promoting regeneration, biodiversity conservation and afforestation measures.

78. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership offers guidance for effective use and governance of additional finance made available by the international community to the Congo Basin. COMIFAC, as strengthened by CBFP members' support, can help to orient and monitor allocation of new funds provided. However, effective use heavily depends on the concerned countries' political ownership and determination to enforce forest protection through appropriate legal frameworks and the establishment of positive incentives for developing new technologies or alternative revenue sources.

IV. Lessons learned

79. Some regional and subregional entities shared the lessons learned or brought to mind in preparing inputs for the present report and answering the questionnaire. APFNet considers that stronger efforts are needed to realize its objective of expanding forest cover by 20 million hectares by 2020. Moreover, a monitoring system with effective data sharing should be established for regional forests, so that the success of policy implementation and developing management strategies can be measured. Finally, local communities can be major allies for forest protection and sustainable use, and their participation should be encouraged and mobilized.

80. The secretariat of the Carpathian Convention states that the identification and securing of sources of funding for project implementation throughout the Carpathian region will be a challenge. Future European Union transnational programmes should be based on macroregional approaches, allowing for the sustainable development priorities of the Carpathian region to be addressed through better coordination of existing or new European Union programmes, such as a "Carpathian Space" programme similar to the existing "Alpine Space" funding programme. The strategic and programme framework should address the Carpathians as an integral whole.

81. Among the lessons learned by International Model Forest Network participants during the 16 years of the organization's development is that additional funding — a difficult calculation that should be neither too much nor too little — is almost always necessary but it is typically far from sufficient to create the conditions for lasting progress towards sustainable forest management. Money is one source of capital, but so too is the critical human capital represented by local and indigenous communities, local business and industry, governments and other stakeholders who must be provided with the opportunity to become full and meaningful participants in defining what sustainable forest management means and working together to achieve it. Ultimately it is the combined political will, trust, confidence, and fundamental listening and learning skills of these stakeholders that make an initiative a success or not.

82. ECE regards the questionnaire as a reminder of the need for consistency between actions agreed to at the global and regional levels. It is important to strengthen synergies with other organizations and actors at the regional level and to work jointly towards the implementation of global goals as well as regional commitments. ECE is particularly interested in being kept informed of global-level activities related to financing of sustainable forest management, especially those of relevance to countries with economies in transition.

83. REPAR-CEFDHAC expressed the view that the elaboration of the responses of the questionnaire was difficult, which might indicate that the questions were too many, too complex and not targeted enough. The elaboration of the inputs was slowed by a lack of coordination and communication among the various actors involved, and the necessary data, when they were available, were unreliable or lacked consistency. Despite all the difficulties and gaps, the preparation of the inputs showed that it is possible to unite divergent interests around a common product and to lay the groundwork

for a real diagnostic and monitoring tool. In the end, it was possible not only to prepare the inputs but also to perform a significant exercise of researching forest-related information on Central Africa.

84. The permanent secretariat of ACTO stated that all initiatives and experiences generate important lessons which feed back into the organization's decision-making process. One of the most important lessons is the need to apply significant effort in the consensual planning process of regional action, including the allocation of time for appropriate interaction and consultation. Moreover, all regional processes are specific and, as concerns regional entities which implement global agreements, the lessons learned have been broadly adopted as can be seen from the results of the Australian-Swiss region-led initiative on regional input in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests, held in Geneva from 28 to 30 January 2008 (see E/CN.18/2009/18).

85. From its experience in promoting capacity-building in the area of payment for environmental services, ESCAP learned that while subregional networking is valuable, networking within a country is just as important. Sharing of country experiences is far more effective than other types of capacity-building in terms of providing inspiration and practical solutions. The countries that made the most progress in terms of payment for environmental services policy were those that identified a specific development challenge related to forest ecosystem services as a basis for policy development.

86. Finally, UEMOA stated that answering the questions sent by the Forum on Forests secretariat allowed the Union to list all its initiatives related to the sustainable management of forests and to realize that there was room for improvement. The elaboration and implementation of a regional forest action plan will allow UEMOA to contribute more to the efforts of its member States to promote and achieve the sustainable management of their forests.

Annex

Regional and subregional entities providing inputs to the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation

Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization

Central African Forests Commission

Congo Basin Forest Partnership

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Europe

Economic Community of Central African States

Forest Europe

Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention)

International Model Forest Network

Montreal Process

Réseau des parlementaires pour la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale — Conférence ministérielle sur les écosystèmes des forêts denses humides d'Afrique Centrale

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

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Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication

Community-based forest management**Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

Community-based forest management stands at a crossroads today. For the past three decades, community-based forest management as a concept has steadily expanded across the world, in both developed and developing countries, but its success has often been perceived as mitigated, partly because the complexity of the process involved in its implementation has too often been underestimated. However, these three decades, during which knowledge has been shared worldwide, have provided us with a rich set of experiences from which valuable lessons can be learned so as to ensure that community-based forest management is implemented in more effective ways. Additional emerging opportunities, including bridging the gap with the timber industry, payments for ecosystem services, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation plus conservation, forest landscape restoration and a growing interest in forest financing, could breathe new life into the concept. As a result, community-based forest management will remain one of the most important instruments in the implementation of sustainable forest management.

* E/CN.18/2011/1.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Community-based forest management: an overview	3
III. Three decades of experience	5
IV. Current trends: the role of community-based forest management	7
A. Forest dependence among women and youth	7
B. Community-based forest management and agriculture	9
C. Economic returns of community-based forest management	10
V. Lessons learned	13
VI. Emerging issues and points for discussion	16
A. Communities, companies and timber production	16
B. Payments for environmental services, climate change and REDD-plus	17
C. Forest landscape restoration	19
D. Forest financing	19
VII. Conclusion	20

I. Introduction

1. Community-based forest management is undoubtedly the cornerstone of sustainable forest management. Contrary to certain myths, wherever there are forests there are people, who have traditionally been, and will continue to be, key forest stakeholders. The inclusion of such communities in forest management through community-based forest management greatly contributes to improving local livelihoods and rural development as well as ensuring environmental sustainability.
2. Yet after three decades of experience in the implementation of community-based forest management around the world, the value and success of these initiatives remains unclear, as do the means required to improve community-based forest management in the future. The present report analyses the key issues relating to community-based forest management today. In particular, it highlights the importance of forests to local communities, draws on past experiences to analyse the lessons learned and focuses on emerging opportunities to promote community-based forest management in the near future.
3. The present report has been prepared as a background paper to facilitate discussion during the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, on the theme "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication".

II. Community-based forest management: an overview

4. Community-based forest management is now a concept familiar to anyone involved in sustainable forest management, on all continents and in both developing and developed countries. In recent decades, its growing popularity among stakeholders has enabled it to be enshrined in virtually all major legal reforms in the forest sector.
5. However, partial scepticism remains as concerns community-based forest management, in part because of the confusion that the concept has created, notably because of the proliferation of terminology. Depending on the country, it may be referred to as participatory, joint or collaborative forest management, social forestry, community forestry or the co-management of forests. However, such terms tend to reflect expressions favoured at the national level rather than effective differences between the ways in which the concept has been translated into practice. For the purpose of the present report, community-based forest management will be defined in a broad sense as the management of forest lands and forest resources by or with local people, whether for commercial or non-commercial purposes. It is characterized by (a) the use of forests by local people on an individual or group basis for consumption and sale; and (b) the community management of forests, that is, a collaborative enterprise led by a group of local people who manage forests independently or with external support for the production of resources for consumption and sale. From its outset, the objective of community-based forest management has been a dual one — to contribute to the conservation of standing forests, and to promote rural livelihoods.
6. While this might seem fairly straightforward, community-based forest management actually encompasses a wide array of forms of forest management in which local communities are involved to varying degrees, in different ways and at different stages of the decision-making process. In a bid to clarify experiences in

community-based forest management and community participation at large, Nobel Prize winner Elinor Ostrom has spearheaded an entire school of research on this issue, and, together with Arun Agrawal, lists five distinct rights of local communities in natural resource management:¹

(a) Access: The right to enter a demarcated area and “enjoy non-subtractive benefits” (e.g., hiking, using the area as a short cut to pass through);

(b) Withdrawal: The right to extract resources and products (e.g., cutting wood, collecting leaves);

(c) Management: The right to regulate resource withdrawal and beneficially alter the area (e.g., setting limitations on wood or leaf collection, planting trees or thinning the forest);

(d) Exclusion: The right to determine who is allowed access to and use of the forest, including how these rights may be transferred;

(e) Alienation: The right to transfer management and exclusion rights through sale or lease.

7. This typology is non-hierarchical and based on five variables, offering a multitude of combinations, which would explain the many ways in which community-based forest management has been applied across the world. Community-based forest management is thus context- and content-specific. For instance, a number of arrangements may permit access and withdrawal rights to selected users while maintaining government control over other functions.

8. Sally Jeanrenaud² provides an example of this with a description of forested commons in Portugal known as *baldios*. Modern agriculture in Portugal has led to the abandonment of many of the traditional values associated with *baldios*, but in 1976 the Government approved a law aimed at restoring such commons to their original users. *Baldios* are managed by five-member councils elected by commoners' assemblies, but, with the decline in the direct involvement of families in farming, many councils have been dissolved. By 2000, only 130 of them remained. In an interesting twist aimed at adapting to these changing conditions, communities that manage *baldios* now organize auctions so as to negotiate with concession-holders, the timber industry and the Portuguese forest service. The benefits accrued from the sustainable extraction of forest products are invested for the benefit of the community, thus illustrating how Agrawal and Ostrom's fifth variable, alienation, is adapted to changing circumstances, while actual management is maintained in the hands of the community.

9. In short, this typology shows that there is no single recipe for the success of community-based forest management. Rather, depending on the context and in particular on the set of forest-related stakeholders, different types of community-

¹ A. Agrawal and E. Ostrom (2001), “Collective action, property rights and devolution of forest and protected area management”, in R. Meinzen-Dick, A. Knox and M. Di Gregorio, *Collective Action, Property Rights and Devolution of Natural Resource Management: Exchange of Knowledge and Implications for Policy*, Feldafing, Germany, Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale Entwicklung (DSE)/Zentralstelle für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft (ZEL).

² S. Jeanrenaud (2001), *Communities and Forest Management in Western Europe: a Regional Profile of the Working Group on Community Involvement in Forest Management*, Gland, Switzerland, The World Conservation Union (IUCN).

based forest management are applicable to different contexts and can contribute equally to sustainable forest management, including rural development, whether in developed or developing countries.

III. Three decades of experience

10. Given the considerable variation in the ways community-based forest management has been implemented across the world, experiences have yielded a number of lessons learned at the global level. A short history of community-based forest management over the past three decades is set out in this section, with an emphasis on the evolution of the concept at the international level, as well as a discussion of the salient issues that have been highlighted by this rich experience.

11. Community-based forest management, as defined above, has existed since time immemorial. Communities have always managed the forests in which they live or are near to. Local knowledge, traditions, folklore and written history, when they exist, all have confirmed this close relationship between local communities and forests in countless locations around the globe. In the past two centuries, however, the growth and emergence of new actors, notably States and large-scale private actors, has led to substantial changes in forest management, with forest management being taken over by these new stakeholders. This has often led to the non-recognition by the State of local communities' customary rights to forest management because such rights had not been enshrined in statutory law.

12. In the 1970s and the early 1980s, as global awareness of deforestation was gradually increasing, the first solutions proposed were classic ones: forests had to be "protected" from local populations, many of which were accused of causing deforestation and forest degradation. This stance, known as "fortress conservation", clashed with development priorities, which often focused on rural livelihoods and the role of the environment in the promotion of rural development.

13. By the late 1980s, however, with the emergence of the concept of sustainable development, decision-makers at the national and international levels had come to realize that environmental conservation (including combating deforestation) and promoting rural development were not necessarily contradictory; if local communities took part in the management of forests, then this could not only contribute to reducing deforestation and forest degradation, but also help to improve local livelihoods. The concept of community-based forest management as the cornerstone of sustainable forest management had emerged.

14. In fact, community-based forest management had existed for at least a decade in a small number of countries, including in Nepal. In the Middle Hills of that country, forests are a key component of rural livelihoods, a fact that the Government recognized in 1978 when it passed a law that enabled forests on public lands to be handed over to local communities.³ Under this system, known as the Hill Community Forestry Programme, the ownership of the land remains in the hands of the State, but the trees legally belong to the user group, represented by an elected committee. The user group retains complete control over the management of those forests, although the Department of Forests of Nepal has the right of veto should

³ J. Carter and J. Gronow (2005), "Recent Experience in Collaborative Forest Management: a Review Paper". *Occasional Paper No. 43*, Bogor, Indonesia, Centre for International Forestry Research.

management rules be transgressed. The programme, which has been in place for more than 30 years, is, despite concerns about equity and governance issues, widely regarded as a great success.

15. At the time of the programme's creation, the experience of Nepal in community-based forest management experience was noted at the 1978 World Forestry Congress, held in Jakarta. That sparked interest in the part of a number of countries, including Indonesia itself, where one of the national timber companies, Perum Perhutani, had already begun a benefit-sharing programme with local communities in Java's teak plantations.

16. The idea quickly spread during the 1980s, buoyed by the emergence of the concept of sustainable development, and took on different forms wherever it took root. In the Brazilian Amazon, the local rubber-tapper (*seringueiro*) movement championed demands that the forests they lived in be managed according to their traditions; those demands resulted in the creation of extractive reserves within which local communities could carry out their own form of sustainable forest management without the threat of being expelled.

17. By the mid-1990s, different forms of community-based forest management were widespread across Asia and Latin America and were gaining ground in Africa, Europe and North America. In 1994, as a result of forestry reform in Cameroon, community forests were created for the first time in an African context, and more than a dozen countries across the continent quickly followed suit. At the same time, the Swiss canton of Freiburg was inviting local communities to participate in the elaboration of forest-management plans, while in Clayoquot Sound, Canada, public consultations were under way aimed at involving the country's indigenous populations in the management of forests where multinational corporations had been operating, which resulted in the creation of an environmentally sensitive, joint-venture logging company.³

18. The expansion of community-based forest management on all continents was reflected in the importance accorded it in intergovernmental discussions. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, resulted in the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests,⁴ also known as the "Forest Principles", as well as chapter 11 of Agenda 21,⁵ "Combating deforestation". Both documents call for the implementation of community-based forest management, as do the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its third⁶ and fourth⁷ sessions, the reports of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its second⁸ and fourth⁹ sessions, and the reports of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its fourth,¹⁰ fifth¹¹ and eighth¹² sessions.

³ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex III.

⁴ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁵ E/CN.17/IPF/1997/2.

⁶ E/CN.17/1997/12.

⁷ E/CN.17/IFF/1998/14.

⁸ E/CN.17/2000/14.

⁹ E/2004/42-E/CN.18/2004/17.

¹⁰ E/2005/42-E/CN.18/2005/18.

¹¹ E/2009/42-E/CN.18/2009/20.

¹² E/2009/42-E/CN.18/2009/20.

19. Communities also play a prominent role in the United Nations Forum on Forests non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, which emphasizes that local communities are one of the main stakeholders in sustainable forest management. It also cites poverty reduction among communities as one of the key objectives of sustainable forest management and supports education, training and extension programmes among local populations. Above all, improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people is highlighted as an essential component of the second global objective on forests.

20. However, in the past decade, a number of donors have shifted away from community-based forest management, many of them expressing their frustration at the lack of tangible results, in terms of both the state of forests and rural livelihoods. It is now clear that the initial enthusiasm, especially in the 1990s, led to high expectations, but few stakeholders realized the sheer complexity of the process of the implementation of successful forms of community-based forest management. This had the positive consequence of casting a different light on community-based forest management experiences and provided a number of valuable lessons for decision makers in improving both the efficiency and the effectiveness of community-based forest management in the near future.

IV. Current trends: the role of community-based forest management in rural development

21. Community-based forest management has now moved into a phase of consolidation. This section provides a snapshot of the importance of community-based forest management to the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, in terms of both cash income and non-cash value.

A. Forest dependence among women and youth

22. The value of forests is well recognized, in terms of both the timber and the non-timber forest products sold in great quantities all over the world. However, the non-cash value of forests is all too often overlooked. Forests provide daily support to households everywhere. Researchers are aware of the importance of non-cash forest value (also known as consumption value), but it is not as yet recorded in government statistics and so largely remains invisible, with its value effectively set at zero. Income in typical household budget surveys and living standard surveys, conducted according to models established originally by the World Bank or the International Labour Organization, includes:

- (a) Cash income from employment;
- (b) Cash income from sales of farm crops;
- (c) Cash income from sales of wood and non-wood forest products;
- (d) "Non-cash" (consumption) income from household consumption of farm crops.

23. However, this does not factor in "non-cash" (consumption) income from forests, such as that represented by the collection and consumption of forest fruit, nuts, vegetables, meat and medicine, as well as the use of wood and non-timber forest products in the household, such as fuelwood. If, in calculating the total annual

income of a developing-country rural household, both cash and non-cash income are factored in, it becomes apparent that this income source, which officially is completely invisible, is in many cases extremely important.

Table 1
Forest use in the village of Tenkodogo, Burkina Faso^a

(Percentage)

<i>Category of forest user</i>	<i>Cash income</i>	<i>Non-cash income</i>	<i>Forest income as a percentage of all income</i>
Men (above average poverty line)	42	58	
Percentage derived from forest	7	31	38
Women (above average poverty line)	36	64	
Percentage derived from forest	10	34	44
Men (below average poverty line)	38	62	
Percentage derived from forest	9	36	45
Women (below average poverty line)	32	68	
Percentage derived from forest	12	38	50
Average contribution of cash and non-cash income to total income	37	63	
Average contribution of forest income to total income	9	35	44

^a IUCN, Burkina Faso (2009), "Applying the Forests-Poverty Toolkit in the Village of Tenkodogo, Sablogo Forest", Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

24. Table 1 shows that in Tenkodogo, Burkina Faso, a Sahelian farming village about three hours from Ouagadougou, non-cash income makes a much larger contribution annually to total income than does cash income. For men who are wealthy or above the average poverty line, non-cash income represents 58 per cent of total income, while for the poorest category — poor women — non-cash income represents more than two thirds of total income, at 68 per cent. Forest income (cash and non-cash) averages 44 per cent of total income, and it is clear that for each of the wealth and gender categories the value of the non-cash contribution from forests to household income is much higher than the value of cash income from forests. The same kinds of findings hold true for many other parts of the world and in particular in developing countries.

25. Although the cash contribution of forest products to household income may not be enormous — table 1 shows that it averages only 9 per cent of all income — such cash value must be put into context. Cash sales of forest products are a poor indicator of the total use people are making of forests and represent only the tip of the iceberg.

26. All household income in rural areas comes partly from what can be grown on a farm and partly from non-farm income, which consists of a mix of cash income earned as wages and income drawn from off-farm natural resources such as forests, rivers and the sea. The remoter the location, the smaller the cash income from wages and the greater the dependence on farm produce and off-farm natural resources. In all cases, the importance of the forest co-varies with the importance of agriculture, and the two need to be understood together, from the point of view of local peoples.

27. Forest dependence thus varies in predictable ways, increasing in remoter areas, where markets are far away and only sales of very-high-value forest products are of interest (spices such as nutmeg, for instance), and decreasing where there are roads and markets and where sales of agricultural crops are easy to organize and wage-labouring opportunities may present themselves. Studies have shown how closely poverty levels and forests can correlate at the level of national analysis. Such differences can be seen over quite short distances and are linked to what constitutes a walkable distance to market and back.

28. Women in many societies turn to forests to diversify and add nutrients to the range of subsistence foods they offer their families, and also for cash. They are often aided in this task by youth, who frequently forage in the forest for their own consumption or to enrich the household's diet. It is normal to find that women and youth are more dependent than men on forests for off-farm income, as shown in table 1, while men may depend more on wage-labouring. For instance, among the Akan in southern Ghana, while the profits from any on-farm activities go to the male head of household, women often generate income which they control themselves, to safeguard their future. Married women may choose to make remittances to their natal families, for instance, as security in case of divorce. In Cameroon and Benin, women increase their activities related to the collection and sale of non-timber forest products right before children's school fees are due, at times of year when ill health is more common and during the pre-harvest period, when hunger is greatest.

29. Not only women and youth but poorer people in general are more dependent on forests for cash and non-cash income. This is partly because they lack the land or labour capacity for more substantial farming activities or for migrant labouring. Although wealthier households may collect more forest products by volume, what poor households collect represents a far higher percentage of their total cash and non-cash income. Chronic poverty (profound, hard to get out of and intergenerationally inherited) is more common in remote forested areas than in less remote areas.

B. Community-based forest management and agriculture

30. Types of non-cash forest dependence vary in different parts of the world, in synergy with types of agriculture. While farm production is almost always primary, the farming household relies on the forest both directly (through inputs to diet, for instance) and indirectly (through inputs to the sustainability of the farming enterprise). In many parts of Africa, animals feed in forests for a considerable proportion of the year. The main non-cash value of forests for those who have cattle is that it keeps their main household asset alive and in good health throughout the year during periods when there is no grass.

31. In the upland hill-farming systems of Nepal, cattle are fed in forests, or on fodder from forests, and kept on terraces so that their manure can be used to supply crops with nutrients. That farming system demonstrates how close the symbiotic relationship with the forest can be. Today, given the growing recognition of this close relationship, forest landscape restoration is increasingly being implemented in a bid to create a win-win situation involving a mixed landscape that includes forests on the one hand and agriculture on the other. The issue of forest landscape restoration is described in greater length in section C of the present report.

32. In the past, in almost every part of the world, before the use of purchased fertilizer farmers made use of forest soil fertility in shifting cultivation systems. Poor soils, in which accumulating weeds and soil toxicity begin to make farming all but impossible after two or three years, drove farmers to move on around their cycle of plots. In many systems, ranging from those in West Africa to those in Indonesia, farmers enrich the plots they temporarily abandon with desired tree species, so that when they return after a few years, they have a more valuable forest than the one they left behind. The farmed parklands of the Sudanic zone in Africa and the slow transition into the multi-storey agro-forests found in Indonesia, Viet Nam and elsewhere are examples of this practice. Farming yields carbohydrates and root vegetables, while the forest can provide protein, green leaves, vitamins and minerals.

33. As studies have suggested, straightforward poverty reduction based on the kinds of cash income that can be generated from sales of non-timber forest products is likely to be limited in areas where the commercialization of forest products is more difficult. These include areas with little or no physical access to markets, either because they are geographically distant or because the cost of transport makes any sale of these products unviable. On the other hand, since all cash-income-earning opportunities are limited, the contribution of forest income is not negligible. The real lesson, however, is that bedrock support for the poor who live in and near forests often comes from non-cash income, and its invisibility makes it very easy to underestimate its importance.

C. Economic returns of community-based forest management

34. The bulk of the data available on the role of community-based forest management in rural development focuses on direct economic returns rather than on non-cash income, but, even then, the data are constrained by the fact that forest enterprise and revenue data are scattered across multiple agencies and databases. This suggests that community-based forest enterprises generate much more revenue than appears in national accounts or is reflected in aggregated data such as the five-yearly forest resource assessment.

35. Community-based forest enterprises are defined in this section as formal or informal enterprises managed by more than one member within the same community. Such enterprises operating in the informal economic sectors in forested developing countries generate multiple jobs, profits and local incomes to formal-sector timber, wood and non-wood operations. Smallholders are increasing their production in a range of non-wood forest products, including rattan, bamboo, paper fibres, cloth fibres, traditional thatching materials, ethnic foodstuffs and spices, medicinal plants and herbs, fruits, seeds and specialty products (honey, birds' nests, insect dyes and fibres, resins, etc.). Interest in natural products among middle-income consumers and the expanded use of natural products for tourism installations are two quickly growing markets.

36. Community forest products are therefore not only about timber, yet the non-timber forest product market is poorly understood. It is known to be huge and diverse, and many products have commercial potential, albeit limited, as a significant source of income. In 2005, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimated the import value of some 34 different non-timber forest products to be \$7 billion, yet more than 90 per cent of the non-timber forest product trade takes place domestically, a trend that is continuing unabated,

especially in developing regions. The total value of medicinal plants globally already exceeds \$100 billion, including planted varieties; a conservative estimate is that non-timber forest products generate \$7 billion in import value and \$70 billion in all trade, discounting barter and local subsistence uses. Community-based forest management accounts for only part of those figures, but this clearly illustrates the potential for growth among community-based forest enterprises within this market niche.

37. As an example, sales of four types of nuts, leaves and fruits basic to West African cuisine generated \$20 million in local market value in 1999, retailing at \$220 million in Europe, with sales growing at 5 per cent a year and expanding towards the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. New immigration and restaurant trends in these diaspora countries indicate that there has probably been a dramatic increase since 1999. This shows clearly that while some markets will be captured by large-scale collectors and investors, many small-scale niches could easily be filled by community-based forest enterprises.

38. More recently, the agreement reached on access and benefit-sharing at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization) provides further income opportunities for community-based forest management. The agreement is aimed at strengthening existing measures concerning the use of genetic resources and communities' ownership of traditional knowledge, notably by extending the fair and equitable sharing of benefits to include the use of derivatives of genetic resources. According to its signatories, local communities, including indigenous populations, stand to benefit considerably from the implementation of the new Protocol.

39. Markets for ecosystem services are also proliferating, with a wide-ranging set of arrangements for watershed and water services and biodiversity and new arrangements for carbon sequestration trading; these represent both threats and opportunities. The rules are still being formulated, and how these markets are defined will have a major impact on the role of community-based forest management. In principle, markets for ecosystem services could be useful mechanisms for capturing some of the non-economic or less tangible values of community-based forest management. Community-based forest enterprises have thus emerged as important and potentially major players within the forest marketplace.

40. Community-based forest enterprises can be very profitable where tenure is secure and they have an enabling environment to grow and mature. A report on community-based forest enterprises issued in 2007 found in its 20 tropical-country case studies that such enterprises showed returns of anywhere between 10 and 50 per cent from timber and non-timber forest products activities. The report also noted that the more mature enterprises invested in diversification, making greater use of their forest resources, and thereby simultaneously managed risk and created new sources of employment and community skills. That tendency reflects the versatility and long-term viability of such enterprises. Emerging ecosystem services and carbon markets can also be lucrative and growing additions to enterprise returns.

41. There are two other important aspects to the local economy benefits generated by community-based forest enterprises. The first is their value in complementing other sorts of enterprises, to create a generally robust economy. They can generate a range of goods and services that are not created by individual enterprises or private industry. Community-based forest enterprises tend to invest more in the local economy than do their private-sector equivalents and foster social cohesion and longer-term equity. By dint of their flexible, locally adapted structures, they are able to switch among different blends of products and to apply traditional knowledge to their operations. In this way they create innovative approaches and find new ways to increase employment and diversify income strategies.

42. The second important aspect is that in addition to ecosystem services, community enterprises make an important contribution to conservation. With increasing recognition of the rights of local communities and indigenous land and resource rights, the amount of forest effectively conserved by such communities has been expanding. This may take the form of forest lands, agroforestry and forest mosaics. These community-conserved forests are an important and growing complement to protected areas under government stewardship or ownership. A conservative initial estimate of the aggregate forest area in Africa, Asia and Latin America under community protection is 370 million hectares — an area nearly as large as the 479 million hectares of forests that FAO estimated fell within public protected areas in 2000. The financial contribution of communities to conservation efforts are also important and likely to rise, as table 2 below demonstrates.¹³

Table 2
Contributions to conservation finance, 2004

	<i>Source of funds</i>		
	<i>Government support to protected-area systems</i>	<i>Official development assistance and foundation support</i>	<i>Community investment</i>
Trend	Stable	In decline	Growing
Amount	\$3 billion per year globally, comprising \$1,000 to \$3,000/ha in developed countries and \$12 to \$200/ha in less developed countries	\$1.3 billion/year official development assistance; others, \$200 million/year	\$1.5 billion to \$2.5 billion/year, at a minimum

Note: Community investment is based on data from communities on average annual expenditure and in-kind labour allocated to fire control, guarding, biological monitoring and habitat restoration.

43. Beyond the raw numbers, the social benefits of employment in community-based forest enterprises can be enormous. In post-conflict countries such as Liberia, where employment for ex-combatants in their home villages is scarce, the opportunities afforded by community-based forest enterprises can be considerable.

¹³ A. Molnar, S. J. Scherr and A. Khare (2004), *Who Conserves the World's Forests? A New Assessment of Conservation and Investment Trends*, Washington, D.C., Forest Trends.

both economically and in terms of social reintegration. Women also benefit from employment; they are able to scale up their own activities and organize themselves into groups. Mature community-based forest enterprises in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso, Honduras, Mexico, Nepal, Guatemala and Peru have been instrumental in providing funds for village roads, schools, health care, old-age pensions, cultural events and fire protection and other conservation investments.

V. Lessons learned

44. Forests play an essential role in the livelihoods of 1.6 billion people in terms of both cash and non-cash income. Nevertheless, in spite of the huge contribution that community-based forest management could make to rural development, donors and organizations that invested financial, technical and human resources into the promotion of community-based forest management in the field have realized that the seeming simplicity of the concept was underpinned by a complex social and institutional process. First among the lessons learned was the fact that some stakeholders were still lukewarm concerning the idea of involving local communities in the management of forests. Despite changing practices, a small number of stakeholders still resist implementing these new forest management principles in the mistaken belief that local populations are the main cause of deforestation.

45. Fortunately, these examples are becoming increasingly scarce, but in many instances institutions and legislation have not been harmonized to facilitate the implementation of community-based forest management. In particular, many community-based forest management initiatives include the creation of community-based forest enterprises, yet policy and regulatory frameworks can be a major barrier to their emergence and growth, especially as rules are usually designed for industrial-scale operations or a small number of companies.

46. But Governments also play an important role in promoting community-based forest enterprises. For example, an innovative programme, the Forest Conservation and Sustainable Management Project, was launched in Mexico in 1996, supported by the World Bank with the aim of supporting and promoting community-based forest management, and was established as a pilot project in the state of Oaxaca. The project was geared towards encouraging and promoting community forestry in Oaxaca, where a large number of communities won stronger tenure rights over their forests in reforms in the 1980s and 1990s.

47. The programme soon expanded to five other major timber-producing states in the country. The project works with interested communities to co-finance forest management plan preparation and other silvicultural, conservation and market studies based on community demand, building the skills and capacity of community members and private-sector service providers so that communities can drive their own forest management and enterprises. The project has collaborated with the World Wildlife Fund to cover forest certification evaluation costs for a subset of communities and promoted diversified enterprises based on non-timber forest products, tourism and cultural services, including traditional medical care. The Government found that its support was quickly translated into increased economic activity and local job creation, with important conservation benefits and investments in other sectors.

48. Secondly, the barriers to the successful implementation of community-based forest management may be due to the communities themselves. When the concept first emerged and was popularized in the 1980s, it was all too often assumed that local communities already had the capacity to organize themselves as well as the technical knowledge to manage forests for lucrative purposes. In the 1990s, however, there was a gradual realization that local populations generally had neither the internal institutional structures in place to manage forests collectively nor the know-how to carry out the reduced-impact or other sustainable forms of logging that were key to improving their livelihoods.

49. To begin with, local communities need to develop the political and social will to establish a community forest. After decades of mistrust between Governments and local communities, the latter are often initially reluctant to engage in collaboration with Government officials. Even when communities display a willingness to implement community-based forest management, a strong commitment is necessary to weather the complex processes of approval, production and marketing and related problems as well as the social pains of organizational growth. Non-governmental organizations can play a supportive role in these initial activities, as well as in agroforestry and the creation of community-based forest enterprises. International and non-governmental support for the development of such enterprises has been in many cases key to creating the political space for innovation and adapting to Government reforms in the forest sector. Where support exists for market information, technical training, business and organizational capacity-building, a number of community-based forest management initiatives have been successful; those without such support have often failed.

50. One key dimension of the success of community-based forest management from the community's viewpoint is representation and inclusion. This is a particularly complex issue, as it entails ensuring that all categories of the community take part in decision-making and perceive that material benefits will result from managing the forest. To date, however, many community-based forest management initiatives have a mixed record on the incorporation of more marginalized segments of the community, notably women and the very poor, although many of the community-based forest enterprise case studies revealed an increased level of inclusiveness as they matured. The diversification of income streams and employment options is an important way of ensuring that women and young people participate and benefit. Diversification has included the extraction and marketing of non-traditional wood products, non-timber forest products and ecotourism.

51. At the other end of the spectrum of inclusion lies the risk of elite capture. Because of the limited capacity and level of education among many communities, a small number of wealthy and/or powerful individuals may appropriate decision-making powers as well as a disproportionate share of the benefits.

52. In some cases, local elites have even fronted fictitious community forests or used other such administrative strategies to divert resources from their intended recipients.¹⁴ Such actions require a better knowledge of legal and administrative systems as well as a greater capacity to utilize these systems than other local actors

¹⁴ J. C. Ribot (2002), "African Decentralization: Local Actors, Powers and Accountability", Democracy, Governance and Human Rights Paper No. 8, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

have, in particular in the absence of capacity-building. In such cases, even if management practices are sustainable from an environmental standpoint, they do not fulfil their objective of reducing poverty and improving local livelihoods, as they continue to concentrate returns from the forest in the hands of a few.

53. Capacity-building with assistance from outside organizations, be they Governments or non-governmental organizations, is one way of overcoming these issues. Through such means, other community members acquire the organizational and entrepreneurial skills necessary to manage community forests, thus widening the pool of community participants in community-based forest management and contributing to a more inclusive distribution of decision-making powers and benefits.

54. Horizontal learning is another effective way of helping community-based forest management initiatives develop and grow. This need not stop at the national level; in some cases, horizontal learning has taken place at the international level through South-South cooperation. The sharing of experiences among community-based forest management initiatives with similar organizational structures and forest products can be essential to finding appropriate solutions to problems or identifying a new range of opportunities. This is particularly important in the case of community forest management practices and the generation and running of enterprises based on ecosystem services. Some national forest policies have provided explicit space for communities to associate with one another (e.g., Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico). In Liberia, a union of chainsaw loggers has been set up that supports the creation of new policies and contributes to the establishment of long-term relationships with forest communities on mutually acceptable terms.

55. The importance of learning is, however, by no means limited to community-based forest management in developing countries. In the 1990s, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service created a set of adaptive management areas within which a collaborative learning programme was established that has since been successfully used for natural resource policy decision-making and involving communities in policy discussions. According to the programme's key principles, it focuses on concerns and interests rather than on positions, features communication and negotiation interaction as the means through which learning and progress occur, and recognizes that considerable learning — about science, issues and the differences between scientific and local knowledge — are essential to the implementation of sustainable forest management with the help of local communities.¹⁵

56. One other useful approach for community-based forest management initiatives is to create associations that naturally favour strong networking and social organization in order to manage community-based forest enterprises more effectively. Associations have also played a positive role in sharing knowledge among enterprises and communities with similar interests and concerns. Such connections have helped smallholders and communities support the government along with the private sector in the setting up of regulatory rules and frameworks and providing a platform for conflict mediation. It has also enabled smallholders in

¹⁵ B. Rose (1995), Cispus Adaptive Management Area, Randle and Packwood Ranger Districts, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Executive summary, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

forest lands where they have not had tenure rights to access forests for collective management and community enterprise.

VI. Emerging issues and points for discussion

57. Given (a) its importance in terms of rural development and livelihoods, (b) the fact that it has been enshrined in many legislations around the world, and (c) the number of market niches in which it could fit (as noted in section IV.C), community-based forest management has great potential for expansion in the near future, further contributing to sustainable forest management and improving rural livelihoods more generally. A number of emerging issues, which are discussed below, could present additional opportunities for community-based forest management to expand and be successful, although measures need to be taken to ensure that community-based forest management benefits from such new initiatives.

A. Communities, companies and timber production

58. One emerging trend in the past decade has been the growing relationship between industrial timber producers and local communities. While this may not be defined specifically as community-based forest management, it relates to the issue and constitutes a new area from which communities stand to benefit and into which community-based forest management could expand.

59. In many countries, especially forest-rich ones, forest management and timber production has historically been dominated by large-scale timber companies with a mixed record in terms of collaborating with local communities and promoting rural development. This has given rise to criticism that the tenure models on which this large-scale industry is based, including the concessionary systems prevalent in Central Africa and parts of South-East Asia, as well as the State's ownership of forests, do not promote local development. It has also been argued that small and medium-sized forest enterprises provide much more direct benefits to local communities and that legislation should favour these in the light of the greater role they play in rural livelihoods.

60. Small and medium-sized forest enterprises, especially community-based ones, are indeed more likely to provide benefits and involve local communities directly in forest management, in particular when they are managed or owned by community members themselves. However, the growing trend of forest product certification is also strongly contributing to large-scale companies reaching out to collaborate with local communities as a key condition for obtaining certification.

61. In Cameroon, for instance, the relationship between large timber companies, many of which originate from abroad, and local communities has historically been a difficult one. Yet in recent years the increasing demand for certified forest products, spearheaded by changing public procurement policies in Europe, has provided a strong incentive for timber companies to set up community programmes. These include favouring local communities in employment; setting up capacity-building programmes within communities so that they can manage funds handled by the company as a benefit-sharing measure; and even rural extension programmes aimed

at helping local communities engage in more sustainable forms of agriculture and animal rearing.

62. Changing market preferences and governance structures more generally are also contributing to the fostering of greater cooperation between local communities and large companies, in terms of both forest management and benefit-sharing. The Canadian Forest Service, for instance, launched the Model Forest Programme in 1990, partly in response to the increase in conflicts among forest stakeholders. A model forest brings together and forms a partnership between individuals and organizations with a common objective: sustainable forest management. These stakeholders include not only large-scale companies but also local governments, landowners and indigenous peoples, known in Canada as the First Nations. Within a model forest framework, partners can gain a greater understanding of conflicting views and combine local and scientific knowledge to improve forest management. The primary objective of this network of model forests is to resolve conflicts and gain local support, but, in practice, it has undeniably resulted in the promotion of community participation, benefit-sharing and community-based forest management more generally. With the creation of the International Model Forest Network, model forests have now been set up in 25 countries, both developing and developed, around the world.

B. Payments for environmental services, climate change and REDD-plus

63. A second trend, payments for environmental services, has been expanding over the past decade, but the emerging climate-change debate, and above all reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation plus conservation (REDD-plus),¹⁶ could result in a significant wave of funding for sustainable forest management. Community-based forest management could stand to benefit substantially from both these initiatives, but a number of potential pitfalls need to be avoided.

64. A payment for ecosystem services is the provision of monetary compensation in exchange for ecosystem services. Payments for ecosystem services can cover activities such as carbon sequestration and storage, biodiversity protection, watershed protection and landscape beautification. Payments for ecosystem services need not take place in a forest context, although forests are ideal for this type of approach, given the multiple benefits they yield when managed sustainably. It is important to note that such payments are voluntary transactions and require a well-defined ecosystem service and that the rights of communities to the forests that they manage are also well defined. In some cases, official ownership is even necessary.

65. Payments for ecosystem services thus present a particular challenge for community-based forest management initiatives, which can benefit poor, forest-dependent communities more than other conservation measures. When located close enough to markets, forests provide many services that can yield economies of scale. Yet uncertainties still remain as to who will be the actual beneficiary of such

¹⁶ REDD stands for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation; REDD-plus includes the role of the conservation and sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

payments, and whether the role of local communities will be fully recognized. It is imperative, therefore, that such schemes recognize the essential role that communities play as stewards of forests so that community-based forest management may fully benefit from these new measures.

66. Payments for ecosystem services are increasingly viewed as a subset of REDD-plus; in that connection, community-based forest management may be facing similar challenges. In addition, funding and requirements for REDD-plus may undermine the trend towards decentralization of which community-based forest management has been part.¹⁷ In particular, the generous and sustained source of funding that REDD-plus could turn out to be would reduce the earlier financial burdens that had prompted decentralization in the first place. For instance, the conservative market value for avoided deforestation in Indonesia, which stands at \$108 million per year, exceeds the entire 2005 budget of the Ministry of Forests of Indonesia.

67. In addition, the implementation of REDD-plus will place new demands on national forest managers that will involve detailed carbon-oriented forest management plans, reliable baseline data and quantitative monitoring, and evaluation and reporting at the national level. Given the technical complexity of such an undertaking and the sophisticated technology required for producing such data, communities may participate in collecting forest-specific data, but carbon accounting, which is a major component of REDD-plus, may require more centralized forms of forest management.

68. It has also been suggested that the increased market value of forests resulting from REDD-plus funding could provide an incentive for central Governments to increase control over forests once again. Under a performance-based payment mechanism, they point out, Governments will be under pressure to avoid the risk of non-payment resulting from the failure of the local level to adequately enforce sustainable forest management.

69. All these problems, however, can be avoided. If communities are left out of the greater REDD-plus picture, there is a real risk that they may lose out on a mechanism that was initially aimed at recognizing the value of standing forests, which they help manage sustainably. Nevertheless, if communities are taken into account in both payments for ecosystem services and especially REDD-plus, and if their crucial role in the implementation of sustainable forest management is officially recognized, and even championed, by national Governments, then community-based forest management could benefit substantially from such new and innovative sources of funding.

70. One benefit that local communities have already reaped from REDD-plus is the importance that REDD-plus debates have accorded indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities. The Coalition for Rainforest Nations — the group of countries that initially championed REDD-plus, contributing to the importance it has today in the context of international policies — has always been careful to ensure that indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples receive the attention that they deserve. This has undoubtedly contributed to the prominent role that they now play in debates related to REDD-plus.

¹⁷ Phelps, Webb and Agrawal (2010), "Does REDD+ Threaten to Recentralize Forest Governance?" *Science*, Vol. 328, pp. 312-313.

C. Forest landscape restoration

71. Community-based forest management need not and should not be thought of as being limited to the forest sector and timber production. Given the increasing recognition of intersectoral linkages and the importance of taking other sectors into account in the implementation of sustainable forest management, it must be acknowledged that community-based forest management is also a part of the broader landscape of environmental management and rural livelihoods.

72. The Loess plateau, in China, is one of the most successful examples of this process. In a mere 15 years, local communities, in collaboration with the Government, have turned a barren, eroded land into a rich landscape of forests, agroforestry, terraced agriculture and pastures. Forests provide the soil-retention and water-production functions that are essential for agriculture and for animal husbandry downstream, while local communities manage forests in collaboration with the Government and are able to sustainably extract timber and non-timber forest products for their own consumption and for sale in local markets.

73. Similar initiatives are now being implemented in other countries through the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration. Through active engagement, collaboration and the sharing of ideas and information among governments, communities, organizations and individuals, the Partnership promotes an integrated approach that seeks to ensure that forests, trees and the functions that they provide are effectively restored, conserved and employed to achieve sustainable livelihoods and ecological integrity. The Partnership promotes active engagement, negotiation and collaboration among all stakeholders, especially local communities, which are the first to benefit from this initiative. Together, stakeholders agree on a package of forest functions that need to be restored, and, throughout the process, they continually learn about and adapt to improving environmental conditions.

74. There is huge potential in this area, as more than 1 billion hectares of degraded areas have been identified that could benefit from forest landscape restoration. Within these landscapes, community-based forest management would no longer constitute a stand-alone approach but would instead be incorporated into other existing rural economic activities. That would contribute to (a) spreading the costs of technical training and capacity-building across several sectors, thus reducing the cost burden of community-based forest management on its own, and (b) allowing for a more integrated approach to rural development and livelihoods. This, in turn, could increase awareness of the impacts, both positive and negative, of different sectors on community-based forest management, in a bid to implement more sustainable forms of forest management through the identification of synergies.

D. Forest financing

75. Last but not least, growing interest in forest financing as a means of implementing sustainable forest management could provide new opportunities for community-based forest management. In 2009, the United Nations Forum on Forests, at the special session of its ninth session, adopted a resolution on means of implementation for sustainable forest management, launching two sister initiatives, the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Financing and a facilitative process.

76. One of the main objectives of both initiatives is to assist countries in the mobilization of funds to implement sustainable forest management, of which community-based forest management is the cornerstone. One year on, both the Ad Hoc Expert Group and the facilitative process are still in their infancy, but special care is being taken in both cases to ensure that community-based forest management benefits substantially as the resolution is put into practice. However, the benefits that forest financing could have for community-based forest management remain contingent upon external financing from public and private sources so as to ensure that the forest financing strategic workplan is effectively implemented.

VII. Conclusion

77. Community-based forest management is at a crossroads today. On the one hand, after the initial enthusiasm of the 1980s and early 1990s, which led to expectations that community-based forest management would be the silver bullet for "saving forests", donor support has stabilized as stakeholders have come to the realization that community-based forest management can be a complex, costly and time-consuming process. On the other hand, three decades of experience have yielded a number of valuable lessons that could help community-based forest management initiatives meet with considerably greater success in future. Along with emerging opportunities such as payments for ecosystem services and REDD-plus, partnerships with the timber industry, forest landscape restoration and the growing interest in forest financing, and barring pitfalls specific to some of these issues, community-based forest management could be one of the most effective means of ensuring sustainable forest management around the world.

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**Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication:
social development and indigenous and other local and
forest-dependent communities, including forest land
tenure; social and cultural aspects**

Cultural and social values of forests and social development**Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report reviews the social, cultural, economic, environmental and political challenges of the complex relationships between people and forests. The report highlights the growing importance of good forest governance and its links to land ownership, tenure security and social development. The role of governance in enhancing the socio-economic and environmental benefits of forests is also recognized. Forests can contribute significantly to addressing the Millennium Development Goals, in particular in relation to water, health and environmental sustainability. The report reviews the linkages between forests and climate change, water and health. The following are identified as key challenges: policy and forest research interface, decentralization of forest governance and the involvement of indigenous communities. The report also identifies three key focal areas concerning the sustainable management of forests which are likely to continue to occupy attention: (a) climate change and new opportunities for forest financing; (b) forest governance, ownership, tenure and use rights; and (c) indigenous peoples and local knowledge in changing global economies.

* E/CN.18/2011/1.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Background	3
II. Contribution of forests to livelihoods, poverty eradication and the Millennium Development Goals	5
III. Forests and climate change	7
IV. Forests and social development	7
V. Forests and cultures	9
A. Cultural and spiritual values of forests	9
B. Opportunities for resilience and restitution	9
C. Application of traditional forest-related knowledge to sustainable forest management ..	10
D. Traditional forest-related knowledge and climate change	11
E. Traditional forest-related knowledge and health delivery	11
VI. Changing forest landscapes and their governance	11
A. Trends and impacts of changing forest landscapes	11
B. Role of governance in enhancing socio-economic and environmental benefits from forests	12
C. Major tenure systems and tenure security	13
D. Changing forms of governance and their significance	16
VII. Emerging issues	17
A. Climate change: opportunities for forest financing	17
B. Ownership, tenure and use rights	18
C. Forests and water	18
D. Forests and the green economy	20
E. Information and communications	20
VIII. Conclusions	21

I. Background

1. Despite their role in the human imagination as repositories of the ancient, the pure, the sacred or the primordial, forests have a history that is one of constant change. That history includes the changing nature and extent of forests, changing human needs and social forms and new approaches to forest governance, rights and access. The history of forests is therefore also about the changing relationships between people and forests.

2. Changes in forests and forest-human relationships have been occurring rapidly over the past two decades, in association with massive global economic, political and ecological shifts. The consequences of deforestation and forest degradation, the need for sustainable forest governance and the intricate links through which the material and economic importance of forests is tied to their cultural and symbolic significance are especially evident at this historical juncture.

3. Current contexts for debating the future of forests include landmark international deliberations related to environmental management, among them the continuing negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, actions under the other Rio Conventions affecting forests (the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in early 2011 (and subsequent meetings in 2013 and 2015), the International Year of Forests (2011), the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) meetings in 2012, the review of the effectiveness of the international agreements on forests in 2015, the urgency of meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and the role forests play in addressing the challenges to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

4. Against this backdrop, the report seeks to draw four lessons:

(a) The first major lesson from the past 50 years of forest governance is that it is necessary to incorporate the voices of people into forest governance if the goals of ensuring that people benefit from forests and maintaining long term and sustainable benefits from forests are to be met. On-the-ground evidence shows a clear need for involving those who live in or in close proximity to forests in decisions about what happens to forests. Perforce, that involvement will be through varied political processes, influenced by preconceived notions about forest residents, shaped by rapidly shifting markets and technologies and subject to changing parameters of global health and human security within forests and beyond;

(b) A second major lesson provided by the history of changes in forests and forest governance is that no single agency or class of actors has the knowledge, capacity and interest necessary for enhanced forest management globally. Collaborative relationships, based on clear tenure, are critically important for better forest management, but collaborations for managing forests are complex. They need commitment, a clear delineation of tenure and roles and ongoing exchange among partners in order to be successful. Only with such collaboration among different forest managers and users and at different levels of decision-making related to forests will it be possible to improve the various benefits forests provide to humans and the planet;

(c) The third major lesson is related to the diversity of benefits from forests. Quite apart from the directly consumable goods upon which hundreds of millions of families depend — timber, firewood, fodder, food, medicine and non-timber forest products — forests also provide other incalculable indirect benefits and services, including carbon storage, biodiversity conservation, disease containment and regulation of hydrological, carbon and various nutrient cycles. Some of these benefits are public, others private; some are local, others global; and some are immediate, and others long term. Appropriate management is critical in order for forests to continue to produce these diverse goods and services that are necessary for life and sustainability;

(d) A fourth and more emergent lesson is that the key benefits from forests are not necessarily synergistic. That is to say, the same actions in relation to forests will enhance some desired benefits but undermine others. Governing some forests so as not to harvest any products from them will enhance carbon sequestration in forests that are not mature, protect biodiversity and reduce the likelihood of the emergence of new disease, but it will also prevent individuals, social groups and nation-States from gaining much in the way of economic or livelihood benefits out of the same forests. Managing forests is therefore an effort to balance different actions and policy goals. The process of choosing how to achieve this balance can be informed by better science and knowledge, but it is also a matter of national interests and how decision makers view the importance of some outcomes over others. Science cannot decide whether those managing forests should place a greater value on biodiversity, livelihoods or carbon sequestration.

5. Information systems and the knowledge base necessary to make informed decisions and balance among competing goals has improved tremendously over the past two decades, particularly with the availability of spatial and remotely sensed data. Nevertheless, there are many parts of the world where there is a genuine lack of needed information and knowledge about forest outcomes and how forest governance is affecting outcomes. More information is needed urgently in order to address questions about trade-offs among different forest outcomes, such as their contributions to livelihoods, biodiversity, carbon sequestration and water conservation; how different types and levels of decision-making affect desired outcomes from forests; and the effects of socio-economic vs. biophysical factors on forest outcomes. Governments and international agencies need to invest more resources in creating a better forest information and knowledge infrastructure than is currently available.

6. The present report was prepared as a background paper to facilitate discussion during the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The themes for discussion at that session under agenda item 5 are as follows: (a) community-based forest management; (b) social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure; and (c) social and cultural aspects.¹ The present report provides a combined review of sub-items (b) and (c), owing to the close relationships between those two themes.

¹ See the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015 (E/2007/42-E/CN.18/2007/8 and Corr.1, chap. I, sect. C).

II. Contribution of forests to livelihoods, poverty eradication and the Millennium Development Goals

7. Hundreds of millions of families depend on timber, firewood, fodder, food and non-timber forest products; forests also provide other incalculable indirect benefits and services. Nevertheless, the key benefits from forests are not necessarily synergistic. Managing forests is therefore an effort to balance different actions and policy goals.

8. The importance of forests and the contributions of forested ecosystems to human well-being cannot be overstated.² The challenge, however, has been to estimate the value of benefits and services produced by different ecosystems, among them forests. One such well-known attempt has been through the ecosystem services approach, which is useful in assessing and reviewing the multiple benefits that forests provide.

9. Ecosystem services are the outcomes of the diverse processes and functions of an ecosystem. They are also seen as the benefits of nature to households, communities and economies.³ Ecosystem services include both the products and the benefits that all forested ecosystems generate. They include, for example, water quality and quantity, timber, firewood, shelter, aesthetically pleasing views, recreational facilities, pollinators, nutrients, medicinal plants and wildlife.

10. In its 2003 report, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, a collaborative project involving more than 3,000 scientists from around the world, crafted a useful framework for thinking about the different ecosystem services forests provide and their interactions.⁴ According to this framework, ecosystem services can be divided into four general classes: provisioning services, regulating services, supporting services and cultural services.

11. Many of the services and types of services provided by forests are not valued financially. Owners and managers of forests who act to protect and conserve forests do not receive any financial compensation for these goods and services, which nevertheless benefit many other humans. One of the key economic questions concerning forest governance is therefore how the right incentives can be created in order to ensure that those forest ecosystem services that are fundamental to human survival can continue to be produced sustainably.

12. Current knowledge permits only a rough discussion of all the different goods and ecosystem services that forests produce. Information on the value of goods provided by forests, such as timber, firewood, fodder and non-wood forest products, is subject to incomplete reporting, inconsistent measures in different countries and missing data on illegal activities. The services forests perform are complex, site-specific and often non-monetized, and the nature of the relationships among these services is for the most part unclear.

² Douglas Krieger, "Economic value of forest ecosystem services: a review" (Washington, D.C., The Wilderness Society, 2001).

³ James Boyd and Spencer Banzhaf, "What are ecosystem services? The need for standardized environmental accounting units", *Ecological Economics*, vol. 63, Nos. 2-3 (1 August 2007).

⁴ Joseph Alcamo and others, *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: A Framework for Assessment* (Washington, D.C., Island Press, 2003).

13. Many different kinds of forest products, particularly non-wood forest products, are highly valuable and important for local livelihoods and national incomes, yet these values are not captured in national accounting. Globally, timber is one of the most important products from forests, especially in the light of the rapid rates of economic growth in many developing countries. The timber trade also helps to meet ongoing needs in many consumer countries. The world's annual wood removal is more than 3.4 billion m³, a little less than 0.7 per cent of the growing stock. The value of annual wood removals exceeds \$100 billion annually, which is nearly equal to the flows of international development aid and more than 50 times the flows for biodiversity conservation aid.

14. The planet's most critical terrestrial biodiversity and wildlife reside in forests classified as protected areas. Although it is undoubtedly the case that a substantial proportion of biodiversity also exists in mixed-landscape mosaics outside protected areas, even in these cases forests serve a tremendously valuable function in harbouring biodiversity. Efforts to protect biodiversity through protected areas have led to a substantial increase in areas under protection, such that nearly 12 per cent of the planet's terrestrial surface is currently under some form of protection. The area of forests designated for protective function⁵ of forests increased by 59 million hectares between 1990 and 2010.⁶ The challenge to managing these protected areas is in ensuring that local and indigenous communities are engaged and that they have access in order to meet their basic needs.

15. Bushmeat, or the meat from wild game, is a highly valued food in tropical forests worldwide, and its increasing scarcity results in "seasonal hunger" among those without alternative protein sources.⁷ Policy and research challenges have long centred around the question of whether there is a viable substitute for bushmeat in the dietary regime of forest dwellers. Many strategies for cultivating alternative sources of protein have been suggested, including the domestication of wild game.⁸ To date, no amount of research or on-the-ground experience has yielded a clear and practicable solution, especially in the light of increasing illegal logging and weak State capacity to conduct monitoring and control efforts. This is posing a challenge to managing protected areas and protecting endangered species.

16. Three factors will conspire to create greater pressures for the deforestation of natural forests in the next two to three decades: firstly, global concerns about climate change and the need to reduce emissions; secondly, the urgent need to find alternatives to fossil fuels — because of price volatility in international energy markets and because of increases in demand for energy; and thirdly, growing demands for food and fibre with increases in population, urbanization and per-capita incomes.⁹ These pressures mean that international efforts concerning forests will

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010* (Rome, 2010).

⁶ Igor Garine, "Adaptation biologique et bien-être psycho-culturel", *Bulletins et mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, vol. 2, No. 2.

⁷ François Feet, "Les potentialités de l'exploitation durable et de l'élevage du gibier en zone forestière tropicale" in *L'Alimentation en forêt tropicale: interactions bio-culturelles et perspectives de développement* (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1996).

⁸ Sten Nilsson, "The three Fs: food, fiber and fuel — global development: science and policy for the future", presentation at the Conference of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (Vienna, 2007).

need to simultaneously identify substitutes for biofuel-based energy and timber and improve the productivity of agricultural land in order to reduce pressures for the conversion of natural forests, and create stronger pro-poor forest governance mechanisms to protect the interests of poorer and marginal populations.

III. Forests and climate change

17. Forests store more than 289 gigatons (GT) of carbon in their above-ground biomass. Climate science has highlighted the dangerously high levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and the role of human activities in contributing to their increase. The role of forests in capping emissions has also become broadly recognized. As the *Eliasch Review* noted in 2008, "Urgent action to tackle the loss of global forests needs to be a central part of any future international deal on climate change".⁹ Such an international agreement needs to not only reduce emissions, but also benefit developing countries through the transfer of financing, supporting poverty reduction and helping preserve biodiversity and other forest services.

18. The *Eliasch Review* identified action in four areas as being key to the successful reduction of emissions from forests: (a) creation of effective targets on the basis of information on baseline levels of emissions from different regions and forests; (b) robust monitoring, reporting and verification of changes in emissions; (c) mechanisms to link forest carbon abatement to global carbon markets, as well as the involvement of the private sector in the forest carbon market; and (d) strong governance and effective mechanisms for the distribution of forest carbon finance, since this will have an impact on local communities and indigenous people.

19. Public awareness of the significance of forests as carbon sinks has grown. The potential of forests for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures has been recognized, and has gained prominence in the discussions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The mechanism for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) has been the most-debated measure and holds the opportunity for forest financing and sustainable forest management. The challenge will be developing the approaches, policies and practices needed to effectively integrate the objectives of climate change mitigation and adaptation with sustainable forest management and ensuring that they contribute to the welfare of local communities and indigenous people.

IV. Forests and social development

20. Since the publication in 1987 of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, entitled "Our Common Future" (also called the Brundtland Report in honour of Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Chair of the Commission; see A/42/427, annex); the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992; and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, the global community has come together to highlight the need for environmental protection and responsible

⁹ Johan Eliasch, *Climate Change: Financing Global Forests – The Eliasch Review* (London and Sterling, Virginia, Earthscan, 2008), commissioned by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

development. This offers the forestry sector unique opportunities and challenges, in particular in addressing poverty eradication, sustainable development and the maintenance of environmental services. A key challenge will be to highlight the contributions of forests to poverty reduction and the central role they can play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Linking forests to the Goals should be built into the awareness-creation programme of the International Year of Forests in 2011.

21. Linkages between forestry and development need to be made using an integrated, multisectoral approach, including in the areas of agriculture, water, energy and other natural resources, in order to promote rural development and improve rural livelihoods. In this regard, there is a need to promote examples at the national and state levels of poverty reduction through forest management policies that have the potential to be scaled up in areas with similar socio-economic conditions.

22. Small and medium forest enterprises and community-based forest management should be supported through capacity-building in management, finance and technology in order to create employment opportunities for youth. Developing the knowledge base of youth in managing forest enterprises should form a basis for promoting and championing rural development using forests, forest industries and allied industries. Forest industries, for instance, provide opportunities for employment and income that exceed those of subsistence farming or small-scale agriculture.

23. There are emerging business models for community and company engagement in respect of managing concessions and corporate social responsibility towards such communities. There is an increasing trend for companies to include communities in forest management, the identification of cultural and sacred sites and in forest governance generally. These emerging business models are increasingly providing opportunities for employment and enhancing the incomes of local communities and families in forest areas. These models are also resulting in increased incomes from the sharing of profits, owing to community-company partnerships, while strengthening social relationships.

24. The increasing trend towards wage labour in the harvesting of forest products, including non-timber forest products, has significant gender dimensions, given the previous trends among many forest peoples towards gender-specialized but balanced cultural ecologies whereby women and men moved through forests together, pooling different kinds of resources for the nourishment of their families and their immediate clan or community. There is a tendency, however, for the conversion of labour to remunerated work to be skewed in favour of males. Effort must be made to ensure the full participation of women, given that they are primary users of forests and that their needs and knowledge of forests must be recognized.

25. Women in the developing world generally have the responsibility of meeting household food and energy needs; the depletion of forest resources therefore increases the burden on women. The situation is worse in sub-Saharan Africa, where the responsibility for taking care of household members affected by HIV/AIDS falls mainly on women, leaving less time for agricultural activities. This makes women more reliant on the forest for food and fuelwood. Furthermore, in conflict situations women are more reliant than men on forest products and services.

V. Forests and cultures

A. Cultural and spiritual values of forests

26. Although trees and forests have immense cultural and spiritual values for humans, their values are poorly recognized, in part because of the lack of a common method for the valuation of forest goods and services. The dominant economic, materialistic, scientific and essentially utilitarian view of forests that has emerged over the last 300 years overlays much older values that have shaped a very strong cultural relationship between forests and humans. These intangible cultural and spiritual values persist in many contexts today, and are undervalued or ignored, their contribution to human well-being unacknowledged.

27. Cultural forests are among the oldest protected areas. For a long time, traditional and religious communities have set aside specific forests, areas of forests, or sometimes even individual trees, for cultural, sacred and religious purposes. Such areas are often well-managed and maintained because of cultural, spiritual and religious values. Integrating cultural and spiritual values into national forestry programmes has the potential to safeguard protected areas and ensure their long-term sustainability. These protected areas have the capability of supporting high levels of biodiversity alongside their sacred values, and are often better protected than Government-designated protected areas. A conscious effort should be made to encourage traditional owners of some sacred forests to seek better protection of their sites, including through the incorporation of those sites within Government-designated protected areas such as forest reserves and national parks.

B. Opportunities for resilience and restitution

28. In the global context, where human-caused climate change has forced a complete re-evaluation of the relationship of the human species with the biosphere, the remaining forests that have been set aside as cultural, sacred or religious forests present unique opportunities to help in halting the destruction of forests and to promote protection, regeneration and even restitution. There is growing evidence that religious communities of all types are already starting to do this and that, with the appropriate support, in particular through capacity-building and forest financing, much more can be done to protect forests worldwide.

29. Beyond biodiversity and cultural continuity, the contribution of forests to human well-being is increasingly being recognized, for example by health professionals. Within this recognition, there is also a spiritual dimension, which itself has a direct link to physical and mental health.

30. There are opportunities for increased research into cultural, sacred and religious forests, which could serve as a counterweight to the economic and scientific valuations of forests that are currently predominant in informing forest business management and policy.

C. Application of traditional forest-related knowledge to sustainable forest management

31. Traditional knowledge and systems of land use have proved far more environmentally appropriate, resilient and complex than initially supposed by outsiders. Traditional knowledge is increasingly gaining recognition for its contributions in shaping policies towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular for eradicating poverty and promoting economic, social and environmental sustainability. Traditional knowledge has made significant contributions to sustaining livelihoods and enhancing human well-being, and has been used over time in the management of natural resources such as forests and water.

32. There is a growing recognition of the role that traditional forest-related knowledge plays in forest management and the conservation of forest biodiversity, as well as in the identification of valuable genetic resources. This knowledge is dynamic, reflecting the ability of local communities and indigenous people to adapt to the changing environmental, social, economic and political conditions so as to ensure that forests continue to provide goods and services such as food, medicine, wood and other non-timber forest products, water and spiritual, social and cultural values. Despite this recognition, the impact of the loss of forest-related knowledge on livelihoods and on cultural and biological diversity, as well as the capacity of forested landscapes to provide environmental goods and services, remain poorly understood and undervalued. Forest management will therefore benefit from the exchange of knowledge and practice between traditional ecological knowledge systems and those of forest science.

33. The major challenges in the promotion of traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management are as follows:

(a) The issues of equitable sharing of benefits and protection of intellectual property rights. The future work of the United Nations Forum on Forests in this area should be informed by the ongoing negotiations under the Convention on Biological Diversity on an access- and benefit-sharing protocol, and by the work of the Task Force on Traditional Forest Knowledge of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations;

(b) The appropriate role of forest science in developing and documenting the traditional forest-related knowledge base in order to allow for a stronger exchange of knowledge between the two systems — traditional forest-related knowledge and forest science — with a view to enhancing livelihoods and human well-being.

34. Due consideration should be given to strengthening research on traditional forest management and its contribution to conservation and sustainable forest management. Efforts should be made to understand the scientific underpinnings of traditional forest management systems. It is also critical to undertake economic, marketing and policy research to improve rural income opportunities from products and services provided through the application of traditional forest-related knowledge. This should be supported by a strong collaboration between holders of traditional forest-related knowledge and educational institutions to develop skills and interest in traditional forest-related knowledge.

D. Traditional forest-related knowledge and climate change

35. Addressing gaps in climate science can be informed by links to traditional forest knowledge, owing to the close relationships between indigenous people and forests. Local observations of changes in the environment have enabled local communities and indigenous people to adapt to climate change, in particular changes in weather patterns. For example, many farming communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America can effectively predict rainfall patterns, representing the potential for the storage of a large volume of information that requires documentation.

E. Traditional forest-related knowledge and health delivery

36. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that between 60 and 80 per cent of people in the developing world use traditional medicine to meet their daily health requirements. Traditional medicine has a strong foundation in herbs sourced from forests. In fact, some modern medicines are plant-based and use these medications for the same purposes that indigenous people do. One challenge, however, to the development of traditional medicine is the absence of legislation to regulate trade practices at the national, regional and international levels. This lack of regulation has also constrained the development of knowledge databases on the use of plants and their ability to treat various diseases. This lack of regulation and documentation can sometimes result in the loss of property rights and benefit flows to local communities and indigenous people. A critical issue will be the need for documentation of traditional knowledge.

VI. Changing forest landscapes and their governance

A. Trends and impacts of changing forest landscapes

37. At some 4 billion hectares, forests cover nearly 31 per cent of the global land area, according to official statistics.⁵ Deforestation rates have slowed from 16 million hectares per year in the 1990s to approximately 13 million hectares during the period 2001-2010. With the planting of new forest areas, the net loss of forests is closer to 5 million hectares per year in the past decade, as compared with 8 million hectares per year during the period 1991-2000. Nevertheless, new forests mostly lack the diversity that is present in natural forests.

38. The total area of forests continues to decline, and South America and Africa continue to have a high net loss of forests. The only major region of the world with a net gain in forest area during the period 2001-2010 was Asia, owing primarily to large-scale plantations in China that offset substantial deforestation in many countries in South and South-East Asia.

39. Most of the world's forests are owned by Governments, but private and other forms of ownership are increasing, and Governments often set aside areas for use by communities. Only about a third of forests are natural forests. More than half are regenerated forests, and about 7 per cent are plantations.

40. A substantial proportion of the world's forests, close to 12 per cent, is classified for the protection of biodiversity, and another 7 per cent is designated for soil and water conservation. Approximately 30 per cent of forests are used primarily for the production of wood and non-wood products, an additional 24 per cent are classified for multiple uses, and 4 per cent are classified as having primarily recreational or other social and cultural functions. The areas classified primarily for productive functions have declined in the past two decades by nearly 50 million hectares, while areas classified for multiple uses increased by 10 million hectares.

41. Forest landscape restoration brings people together to build sustainable relationships among communities, commercial interests and the damaged ecosystems on which they depend. Forest landscape restoration has had a great impact in generating alternative livelihoods, and in creating employment and long-term socio-economic infrastructures for providing support to vulnerable communities. Such restoration relies on demonstrating the viability of other forms of income generation that do not continuously sap a forest's resources. It has been successfully implemented in the Great Lakes Region (Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo).

42. Successful restoration projects require the collaboration of all stakeholders that share the forest landscape, from local farmers and landowners to logging companies and family-run charcoal producers. Forest landscape restoration should have the support of the communities that depend on forests for their livelihoods. For instance, the local population of the mangrove forests of the Caribbean region of Colombia is leading the transformation of endangered mangroves through a project being implemented by the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

B. Role of governance in enhancing socio-economic and environmental benefits from forests

43. Forests provide direct and indirect livelihoods and other economic benefits to more than 1.6 billion people.¹⁰ Forests have long been seen as the reservoir and source of much of the species biodiversity on the planet. The carbon stored in forests is above 650 GT, more than that found in the atmosphere, suggesting that the removal of forests will more than double current levels of atmospheric greenhouse gases, to well above the levels deemed tolerable by climate scientists.

44. These statistics about forests are important in order to convey their immense significance for the survival of humanity as a species, but it is the real lives of people living with and in forests, and the ways in which they depend on forest resources, that are more immediately relevant in considerations of how to govern forests so as to ensure the security of the livelihoods of the poor and marginal peoples that depend on forests.

45. Successful governance requires that rules evolve. The fascinating institutional interplay related to socio-ecological complexity and contextual change has helped generate a vast body of research on forests. The size, variety and depth of this body

¹⁰ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Tenure security for better forestry: understanding forest tenure in South and South-East Asia" (Rome, 2007).

of research is a reasonable reflection of the many different ways in which forests have been, and continue to be, central to human survival, livelihoods and prosperity.

46. In recent times, forest governance has for the most part moved away from the centrally administered, top-down regulatory policies that characterized forest governance for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Unlike during much of the colonial period, when Governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America sought to bring forests under their control for the resources, strategic value and economic benefits they represented, the process has been quite the reverse, with regional variations.

47. Through decentralization reforms in the last two decades that have often also promoted local, more democratic, participation in governance, local communities and organizations have come to govern close to an additional 200 million hectares of forests.

48. Many Government-owned forests are managed as common property for multiple uses by local communities and community-based organizations. Many other forests classified as being under public ownership are effectively governed as private timber concessions by logging companies.¹¹ Civil society organizations and market incentives increasingly play a role in forest governance through certification processes, Government procurement policies and changing consumer preferences. This trend in governance is seen as a response by civil society to public concern about deforestation and forest governance.

49. Although payments for environmental services of forests have not become a major force in terms of the size of the area under such schemes, there is reason to believe, especially if REDD projects and policies become entrenched, that payment for environmental services initiatives will constitute a substantial shift in the governance of forests in the future.

C. Major tenure systems and tenure security

50. Forests can be viewed as falling under three major forms of tenure: (a) public, or Government, ownership; (b) private or market ownership; and (c) communal or civil society ownership. Government agencies own most of the world's forests: nearly 80 per cent. Private and communal/indigenous tenure cover 11.9 and 8.3 per cent, respectively, but in the developing world the position of communal and indigenous actors is far stronger. Private actors possess only about 5.6 per cent, in contrast to the 14.1 per cent of forests characterized by communal tenure, but, since half a billion people or more may be dependent on forests for their livelihoods, the total area communities own and control seems quite low. Ongoing trends would seem to favour greater access to and control over forests by local communities.

51. Variations in tenure arrangements are important to take into account because they create different incentives for the holders of tenure, and therefore lead them to act in different ways when using, managing or conserving the resources they own. In practice, tenure rights over forests are often far more finely divided and

¹¹ Alain Karsenty, "Overview of industrial forest concessions and concession-based industry in Central and West Africa and considerations of alternatives" (Paris, Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement, 2007).

distributed among different social groups. Discussions of property rights and natural resources distinguish among four basic elements relevant to the use and governance of forests: (a) access and withdrawal rights; (b) management rights; (c) exclusion rights; and (d) alienation (transfer) rights. When a household, community or group has access and use rights to forests, it can gather benefits from that forest. When it also holds management rights, it can be viewed as a claimant to a resource. Those who have access and use rights, management rights and the right to exclude other users from forests are seen as proprietors of the forest. Owners have all the rights that constitute the full bundle of property rights with respect to forests.

52. Whether forest tenure and rights to use, manage, exclude others and transfer forests rest with communities, private owners or public agencies, they have major implications for forest management outcomes. Some kinds of tenure are more likely to lead to greater economic efficiency and output from forests.

53. Just as private ownership of forests is often associated with high economic benefits (and deforestation), other tenure arrangements, such as Government ownership, are seen as necessary for safeguarding plant and wildlife biodiversity in forest areas. Other arrangements may also be more strongly associated with carbon sequestration. Indeed, different ecosystem services from forests exist in distinctive relationships with different allocations of tenure rights over forests.

54. Although in practice different forms of tenure and ownership might exist only in mixed or hybrid relationships, it is still useful to outline the key outcome tendencies associated with the different forms of tenure. Public or Government tenure corresponds with an emphasis on the exclusion of multiple types of use rights in forests, a focus on conservation and protection, and the capacity to restrict use. Indeed, most of the world's most restrictively protected forests are under governmental forms of tenure. Governments own most of the protected areas in the world; they also own and manage closed-access forests for soil and water conservation purposes, and they are one of the few groups of actors that can continue to spend more on forest protection than they receive as income from forests.

55. In contrast, private ownership is associated with greater efficiencies in the management of forests, the capacity to generate greater economic output and profits and the capacity to enhance economic development-oriented objectives. Most of the world's forests that are managed for profit are, in consequence, owned by private corporations. Even in those instances in which Governments own such forests, the rights to manage them, as in the case of concessions, is often auctioned off to private companies. Plantations are managed by both Governments and private actors, but plantations oriented towards high profits — whether through the sale of timber, cash crops or carbon — tend to be owned and managed by private companies. Indeed, major new areas such as carbon sequestration are more likely to become a viable market in the future, owing to efforts by private companies to own more lands, particularly in tropical countries, in a bid to benefit from sequestering large amounts of carbon at relatively low costs and to secure profits accruing from higher carbon prices. A key challenge will be to ensure that benefits from such transactions benefit local and indigenous communities.

56. Customary or community tenure, on the other hand, typically corresponds with the management of forests for multiple uses and objectives — among them, local livelihoods, the promotion of use-oriented diversity in forests and, often, when

tenure rights are secure, enhancing forest biomass.¹² The long-run livelihood interests of communities, local populations and indigenous groups in forests are seen as translating into a willingness to manage forests for longer-term benefits, and a willingness to protect forests in the short run so as to secure future gains.

57. Another way to enhance forest outcomes is to seek complementary interests and capacities among private, communal and public forms of tenure. Because tenure over forests comprises a number of different rights that can often be separated in practice, it is easy to imagine hybrid forms of forest tenure in which communal actors may have the right to access, use and manage a forest, while the right to exclude other users and transfer the resource might be vested in Government agencies. An analogous combination can be imagined in the case of Governments and private actors or companies, or in the case of mixed forms of tenure in which different communal organizations have different rights. Alternatively, a situation in which a number of different types of actors might have specific rights can also be envisioned. Indeed, there are many efforts to build such amalgams of rights ownership that attempt to marry the interests of private, communal and public decision makers, which could result in different forms of hybrid tenure and governance arrangements in relation to forests.

58. While the allocation of tenure and incentives to different groups of decision makers, government agencies, corporations and communities has clear implications for whether forests are more likely to be conserved for biodiversity, used for livelihoods or economic benefits or protected for carbon sequestration, security of tenure is necessary in all of these examples in order for tenure to be effective in producing desired social outcomes.

59. An analysis of tenure security over mangrove forests in Indonesia and Viet Nam shows that such forests are often managed well by local communities that use them for livelihoods but do so without endangering the sustainability of the resource system. When central Governments attempted to manage the same forests, however, local users lost any sense of secure rights over benefits from forests.¹³ Consequently, the utilization of these forests became far less sustainable, with State appropriation and enforcement of claims over the wetlands.

60. Insecure tenure undermines the incentives for owners to improve their assets, protect them against illegal use or act in their own long-term interests. It is no wonder that many of the world's Governments, civil society organizations and indigenous peoples, including the Accra Caucus on Forest and Climate Change and the Governments of Norway and Belize, are calling for greater clarity of tenure over forests.¹⁴

¹² Ashwini Chhatre and Arun Agrawal, "Trade-offs and synergies between carbon storage and livelihood benefits from forest commons", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, vol. 106, No. 42 (20 October 2009).

¹³ W. Neil Adger and Cecilia Luttrell, "Property rights and the utilization of wetlands", *Ecological Economics*, vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 75-89 (October 2000).

¹⁴ See Accra Caucus on Forest and Climate Change, "Principles and processes as preconditions for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation", which summarizes the main concerns of participants in a meeting of civil society and indigenous peoples, held in Accra from 18 to 20 August 2008, to discuss reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. These concerns were restated during the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Poznan, Poland, in December 2008.

D. Changing forms of governance and their significance

61. Changes in forest governance can be brought about by local actors, corporate actors and international donors by advancing policy positions and mobilizing to make demands on Governments and other high-level decision makers. There are many examples from around the world of mobilization by local actors to gain a greater voice in how forests are governed. There are also now more opportunities for local populations and communities to influence what happens to the forests on which they depend; however, this will require the support of Governments. There should also be a close and coordinated working relationship between the United Nations Forum on Forests and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in addressing the issues of indigenous people that relate to forests, while continuing to "Deliver as One".

62. Three important forest governance trends stand out: (a) decentralization of management, especially for forests of low commercial value that nonetheless play an important role in the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of rural households in developing countries; (b) the substantial role of logging companies in the management of forest concessions, typically for selective logging in tropical forests; and (c) the growing importance of market-oriented certification efforts. Although such efforts originally targeted tropical timber, they have gained prominence mainly in temperate forests in the developed world. An emerging trend that could create a substantial shift in the governance of forests in the future is that of payments for environmental services. This could be a major force if REDD-plus projects and policies are entrenched. The challenge will be how to ensure that benefits from payments for environmental services are reinvested in forests and that there is a transparent mechanism to ensure the flow of benefits to local communities and indigenous peoples. The success of any such mechanism under REDD-plus will depend to a large extent on the involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples.

63. The private concession model in forest governance has long been in existence.¹⁵ Under concessionary forest governance, central Governments or forest departments provide long-term resource extraction rights in commercially valuable forests to logging interests in exchange for a stream of revenues. Concessions continue to be a dominant form of forest governance in many tropical forests in South-East Asia, parts of the Amazon and especially in Central and West Africa, where at least 75 million hectares of forests are under concession to logging companies.¹¹ Governance through forest concessions is prompted by demand for logs and timber, often in distant markets, and by the need of Governments for revenues. The limited enforcement of concession agreements in most countries in South-East Asia and Africa has also meant that legal logging in concessions exists side by side with costly and unsustainable levels of illegal logging. The World Bank estimates that illegal logging results in a loss to developing countries of \$15 billion every year.

64. Voluntary forest certification has arisen to fill the gap in forest governance. Certification efforts may have been launched as a way to improve the sustainability

¹⁵ Rebecca Hardin, "Concessionary politics in the western Congo basin: history and culture in forest use", *Environmental Governance in Africa Working Paper*, No. 6 (Washington, D.C., World Resources Institute Institutions and Governance Program, November 2002).

of tropical forest management; however, they have gained more usage in the temperate and boreal forests in developed countries. Increasingly, through the introduction of procurement policies, legislation and initiatives such as the European Union Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade and the Lacey Act amendments, Governments are making global efforts to address illegal logging.

VII. Emerging issues

A. Climate change: opportunities for forest financing

65. There is a growing recognition of the role of forests in developing countries in addressing climate change through the provision of incentives for REDD, which provides opportunities for enhancing poverty reduction by implementing climate change adaptation. Payment for environmental services schemes involving global public goods and services from forests, such as climate change mitigation and biodiversity, provide opportunities for forest financing.

66. REDD-plus provides opportunities for developing a mechanism through which developed country donors, corporations, non-governmental organizations and individuals will compensate developing countries for reductions in forest emissions, including through market mechanisms. REDD-plus will be a key emissions mitigation strategy, as evidenced by extensive donor investments to prepare developing countries to implement REDD-plus (e.g., \$4.5 billion from six developed countries by 2012). It is expected that, by 2020, REDD-plus investments may reach \$30 billion a year. This will have the potential for increased finance for forests.

67. Under REDD-plus, recipient Governments will devise strategies for national land-use and forest sector planning, stakeholder negotiations, tenure clarification, carbon brokering, national-level carbon accounting and the provision of funds and services to local actors. A key challenge will be the involvement of local communities and indigenous people in REDD-plus discussions and implementation. With the potential for financing forests, there is the possibility of a shift away from decentralization, as State forestry institutions may have the desire to manage such resources.

68. Future REDD-plus mechanisms must ensure that the rights of local communities and indigenous people are formally integrated into climate change programmes. The recognition of the rights of indigenous people and their traditional knowledge, their involvement in political decision-making processes and the equitable sharing of benefits are three principles that should guide future REDD-plus mechanisms.

69. REDD-plus mechanisms for implementation will be successful if safeguards and co-benefits, such as the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services and poverty eradication among local communities and indigenous people, are realized.

70. Existing and emerging initiatives concerning climate change, such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, the Forest Investment Programme, the Amazon Fund and the Congo Basin Forest Fund, should provide opportunities for reviewing

lessons learned and developing a mechanism to enhance the flow of funds for addressing gaps in financing for sustainable forest management.

B. Ownership, tenure and use rights

71. It is clear that tenure and allocation of rights are among the most important factors influencing the stewardship of forests, their management and outcomes associated with forest governance.

72. Forest land tenure is reported by regional organizations to be an effective way of mobilizing farmers for protection and good forest management while improving their livelihoods. Land tenure reforms in countries such as China, Nepal and Viet Nam have enhanced livelihoods and community engagement in sustainable forest management. China's recent land tenure reform is arguably the largest in world history, affecting more than 400 million landowners and 100 million hectares of forests. The reform has resulted in increased incomes for farmers increased tree planting.¹⁶ China's experience offers experience and lessons for other Member States considering the recognition of collective land rights.

73. A challenge to land tenure reforms is the issue of a legal framework that guarantees the rights of indigenous people and facilitates the participation of local and indigenous communities in addressing land tenure and ownership, as well as the historical exclusion of local communities and indigenous people. Additional information on land tenure is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on community-based forest management (E/CN.18/2011/4).

C. Forests and water

74. Forests have a close relationship with our water resources. Sustainable forest management is of vital importance for the supply of good-quality fresh water, protection from natural hazards like floods and soil erosion and combating desertification. For example, 10 per cent of European forests are designated primarily for the protection of soil and water; however, climate change is altering the role of forests in regulating water flows and influencing the availability of water resources. The relationship between forests and water is therefore a critical issue that must be accorded high priority if its contribution to the Millennium Development Goals is to be realized.

75. One of the greatest values of forests is sustainable water supply. Historically, however, forest managers have not focused on water, and water managers have not focused on forests. There is an increasing need for these two groups to work together and examine the interrelationships between forests and water in order to allow for the sharing of knowledge between the forestry and water sectors. Forests of the future may need to be managed equally for the sustainable supply of clean water as one of the goals for sustainable forest management, taking into account the growing demand for clean water for rural and urban populations and for agricultural purposes.

¹⁶ Jintao Xu, Andy White and Uma Lele, "China's forest land tenure reforms: impacts and implications for choice, conservation and climate change" (Washington, D.C., Rights and Resources Initiative, 2010).

76. Access to clean water has remained one of the five key thematic areas (water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity) that were proposed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, highlighting the fact that managing natural resources like forests in a sustainable and integrated manner is essential for sustainable development. In this regard, to reverse the current trend in forest degradation, strategies need to be implemented that include targets adopted at the national and, where appropriate, regional levels to protect ecosystems and achieve the integrated management of land, water and living resources associated with forest areas. This will also involve the strengthening of capacities at the regional, national and local levels.

77. In many regions of the world, the availability and the quality of water are more and more threatened by overuse, misuse and pollution, and it is increasingly recognized that both are strongly influenced by forests. It is in maintaining high water quality that forests make their most significant contribution to the hydrological characteristics of watershed ecosystems. This is achieved through the minimization of soil erosion on site, the reduction of sediment in water bodies (wetlands, ponds, lakes, streams and rivers) and the trapping or filtering of other water pollutants in the forest litter. For instance, the Lange Erlen forested area in Switzerland is flooded a dozen days each month with water from the Rhine river in order to allow forest soil to filter the water to improve its quality and recharge the groundwater of the nearby city of Basel. The forests-water linkage is an opportunity for improving livelihoods and human well-being.

78. Forested catchments supply a high proportion of water for domestic, agricultural, industrial and ecological needs in both upstream and downstream areas. A key challenge faced by land, forest and water managers is to maximize the wide range of multisectoral forest benefits without detriment to water resources and ecosystem functions. To address this challenge, there is an urgent need for a better understanding of the interactions between forests and water, particularly through research, science and traditional knowledge, so as to create awareness and build capacity in forest hydrology, thereby translating this knowledge and these research findings into policies that will improve livelihoods.

79. National forest programmes should be used as a platform to integrate water resource management plans into forestry programmes as part of a more comprehensive watershed planning process. Similarly, greater consideration in the management of transboundary watersheds and river basins should be given to the relationship between upstream forest cover and downstream water flows. An example is the Programme on the Sustainable Development of the Rhine, a transboundary initiative that adopts afforestation and forest conservation measures in order to facilitate water retention and prevent floods in nearby downstream areas.

80. There is a need for more applied research on forests and water, as well as for strengthened partnerships among research, educational, financial and political institutions. Sound comparative valuations are needed of forest services (hydrological and non-hydrological), including of their contribution to the livelihoods of forest people, the production of biofuels, the maintenance of biodiversity and aesthetic and recreational value. These needs are even more pressing with climate change adding to the complexity of the forest-water relationship and influencing forestry and water policies in many regions of the world. New and innovative solutions should be promoted among policymakers in

the forest and water sectors in order to ensure the flow of benefits to all segments of society.

D. Forests and the green economy

81. The United Nations Environment Programme's Green Economy Report makes a case for increasing public and private investments in "green sectors" such as sustainable agriculture, cities and buildings, renewable energy, fisheries, forestry, industry, transport, waste management and recycling and water. The Report is intended to motivate and enable policymakers, business executives and shareholders at large to invest in green sectors and green policy reforms. Investing in clean energy, sustainable transport, forests and environmentally friendly agriculture is essential if internationally agreed goals to reduce poverty are to be achieved.

82. The forest sector has opportunities to contribute to the transition towards a green economy, with environmental, economic and social benefits for society, and to explore payment for ecosystem services schemes and other measures that broaden and diversify the financial basis for sustainable forest management and help maintain the protective functions of forests.

83. Wood energy, green infrastructure and buildings, and the role of forest resources as carbon sinks all present opportunities for the forest sector. Biomass energy can become a major player in the future energy supply and has better environmental credentials than biofuels derived from annual crops. With life-cycle analysis for building materials, wood will have a strong comparative advantage when compared with other building materials; it therefore has the potential to gain market share and usage in any future green construction.

E. Information and communications

84. A major challenge to effective forest governance is the inadequacy of knowledge needed to make appropriate decisions. Better knowledge about forests is needed in order to decide which forests are ecologically best suited for which purposes. There is limited data on forest conditions, property rights and the suitability of forests for given purposes. With the discussions on climate change and the potential for carbon-trading, the need for data and information will pose a challenge to managing forests sustainably and for their diverse use.

85. Investments in better information and knowledge about forests and their capacities, and about stakeholders and their interests, can help improve forest governance substantially. Better information systems and improved analyses are necessary to govern forests for improved outcomes and benefits. It is also of fundamental importance that such information and analyses be shared with those who need them and can benefit from using them. It is therefore important to take advantage of existing information and communications technologies to provide necessary information about forests to users at low cost, and to help them make better decisions. This creates new opportunities for better information-sharing and knowledge-building that call for improved initiatives in education and access in the forest sector. The International Year of Forests provides an opportunity and a platform to launch this information and communications drive in the forest sector in

order to create better awareness and enhance policy development through the improved sharing of information and knowledge.

VIII. Conclusions

86. In the last three decades, forest rights and governance have changed in unprecedented ways, particularly in respect of the relationships between communities and Governments. This period has seen greater openness on the part of forest decision makers regarding the involvement of local populations in governance and in sharing the benefits from forests. It is critically important that these trends continue and be made more secure in the future.

87. One of the primary lessons from the past 50 years of forest governance is the need to incorporate the voices of people into forest governance if the goal is to ensure that people benefit from forests and to maintain long-term and sustainable benefits from forests.

88. It is important to consolidate ongoing processes of governance that are bringing together different groups of decision makers from communities, corporations and government agencies around mutually overlapping goals of forest governance, namely hybrid governance. Hybrid governance arrangements are challenging to craft and nurture. Government agencies that have been accustomed to managing forests by excluding others from forest use and governance as a result of historic and inherited colonial systems will need to accommodate new interests in forests so as to meet the increasing level of demands on forests and the competition among such demands.

89. Forests of the future may need to be managed equally for the sustainable supply of clean water as one of the goals for sustainable forest management, taking into account the growing demand for clean water for rural and urban populations and for agricultural purposes.

90. It is important to underscore the need to reform tenure rights and arrangements so as to attend to the interests of local communities and indigenous people, particularly in ensuring the flow of benefits under any emerging mechanism on REDD-plus under the current climate change negotiations.

91. Valuation of forest goods and services can provide opportunities for forest financing and contribute to improving human well-being.

92. Better knowledge about forests is needed in order to decide which forests are ecologically best suited for which purposes, and who the major claimants and stakeholders in relation to different forests are. Better information systems and improved analyses are necessary in order to govern forests for improved outcomes and benefits. Developments in information and communications technology should be used to provide the required information about forests to users and policymakers at low cost, and to help them make better decisions.